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LECTURES

ON

THE FOUR LAST BOOKS

OF THE

PENTATEUCH;

DESIGNED TO SHEW THE

DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE JEWISH RELIGION,

CHIEFLY FROM INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

66839

IN THREE PARTS:

I.—THE AUTHENTICITY AND TRUTH OF THE HISTORY.
II.—THE THEOLOGICAL, MORAL AND POLITICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE JEWISH LAW.
III.—REVIEW OF THE EFFECTS OF JUDAISM AS PREPARATORY TO CHRISTIANITY.

DELIVERED IN THE CHAPEL OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN,
AT THE
LECTURE ESTABLISHED BY THE PROVOST AND SENIOR FELLOWS,
UNDER THE WILL OF MRS. ANNE DONNELLAN.

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LECTURES

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THE FOUR LAST BOOKS

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PART III.

CONTAINING

A REVIEW OF THE CHIEF EFFECTS OF JUDAISM AS CONNECTED WITH, AND PREPARATORY TO CHRISTIANITY:

In examining which, many of the principal Objections which have been advanced against the divine original of the MOSAIC LAW are considered.

PART III.

LECTURE I.

SETTLEMENT OF THE JEWS IN CANAAN.

SECT. I.—*THE Objection arising from the treatment of the Canaanites considered, so far as relates to the Canaanites themselves—Objection includes two questions—Doubt as to the extent of the severity exercised against the Canaanites—This severity justified by their crimes—Their idolatry not an error of judgment alone—Cruelties and pollutions it produced—Necessity of expelling them from the land in which the Jews were to settle—Their guilt incorrigible—The objection proved to lead to Atheism—Analogy between the general course of Providence, and the treatment of the Canaanites—In the sufferings of the innocent—Connection of this measure with the entire scheme of the divine œconomy—Review of the considerations offered on the first part of the objection.*

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querors—Avarice and licentiousness checked by the situation in which they were placed—And sanguinary passions—Abhorrence of idolatry impressed upon them, but not a spirit of personal or national hostility—Proved by their conduct to the Canaanites—Necessity of employing the Jews as instruments of this severity—to alienate the two nations—to overturn the grand support of idolatry—to impress a salutary terror on the Jews themselves—to supersede the necessity of a continued series of miracles—Treatment of the Amalekites—Nature of their crime—Connection of their punishment with the general scheme of the Jewish dispensation—General answer to all objections of this kind—This dispensation did not encourage a spirit of general persecution or conquest—Care taken it should not harden the hearts of the Jews—General laws of war among the Jews merciful—Great care to encourage a spirit of humanity—Conclusion.

PART III.

LECT. I.

SETTLEMENT OF THE JEWS IN CANAAN.

DEUTERONOMY xx. 16, 18.

"Of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God "doth give thee for n inheritance, thou shalt save no- "thing alive that breatheth: that they teach you not to "do after their abominations, which they have done unto "their gods, so should ye sin against the Lord your God."

IN reviewing the effects of Judaism, our attention is in the first instance necessarily directed to the consequences attending the first settlement of the nation, in the country assigned them by God for their inheritance; a subject of the utmost importance, because this command to exercise such extreme severity against the nations of Canaan, whose land the Jews were to possess, has been always considered as the strongest objection to the divine original of the Mosaic Law; and therefore demands a candid and full discussion. For this purpose it seems necessary to inquire, whether

whether this transaction can be reconciled with just ideas of the attributes and providence of God, *so far as it affected the Canaanites*; or in other words, whether the severe punishment inflicted on these nations, was justified by their crimes; and whether it is credible, that their destruction, and the settlement of the Jews in their room, should form a part of the divine œconomy. The *next* question that arises seems to be, whether the *mode* in which this punishment was inflicted, and this settlement of the chosen people of God secured, is reconcileable with just ideas of divine wisdom and mercy, *so far as it regards the Jews:* or in other words, whether it is credible, God should directly command the extirpation of the Canaanites by the sword of the Jews, rather than effect it by any other means. These two inquiries seem to include every question which can arise on this important subject.

Let us then first examine, how far the severe punishment * inflicted on the nations of Canaan was

* Before my reader proceeds in this inquiry, it is expedient to remark, that considerable doubt exists as to the real purport and meaning of the commands delivered by the Jewish Lawgiver on this subject, and the true extent of the severity ordered to be exercised against the Canaanites. The whole passage runs thus: † "When thou comest nigh "unto

† Deut. xx. from 10 to 18.

was justified by their crimes; and whether it is credible, that the settlement of the Jews in their

" unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto " it. And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and " open unto thee, then it shall be that all the people that is " found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall " serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but " will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: and " when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, " thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the " sword. But the women and little ones, and the cattle, and " all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou " take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine " enemies, which the Lord thy God shall give thee. Thus " shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from " thee, which are not of the cities of those nations. But of " the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth " give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing " that breatheth; but thou shalt utterly destroy them, as the " Lord thy God hath commanded thee: that they teach you " not to do after their abominations, which they have done " unto their gods, so should ye sin against the Lord your " God." On this passage there are two opinions: one, that the injunction, " When thou comest nigh unto a city, to " fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it," extends only to the cities of the nations afar off, but does not apply to the cities of the seven nations; who, according to the opinion of these commentators, were to be utterly destroyed without any offer of peace. The other, that this injunction applies to every city alike, which the Israelites approached against, even of the seven nations; and that the difference of treatment was not to take place until after this proffer of

peace

their room, should form a part of the divine œconomy.

What

peace was rejected, and the city in consequence subdued; when, if it were a remote city, they were permitted only to put to death those who bore arms against them, who, at that period, were all the adult males; but that if it were a city of the seven nations, all its inhabitants should be utterly destroyed; lest, if permitted to remain, they should infect the chosen people of God with the contagion of that obstinate idolatry, to renounce which was always one of the conditions of that peace which they had presumptuously rejected. On this last supposition, the Israelites were to offer peace to the Canaanites and spare their lives, on condition of their emigrating for ever from their country, or renouncing idolatry, adopting the principles of the patriarchal religion, contained in the precepts of Noah, resigning their territory, dissolving their national union, and submitting to become slaves. For it is evident that they could not tolerate idolatry, nor enter into any equal leagues which the idols, who were worshipped as the guardian gods of the adverse party, must be supposed to witness and sanction; nor leave in the possession of their cities and lands those nations, whose country the great Jehovah had assigned to them as their peculiar inheritance, to be entirely divided among their several tribes. But that if the nations of Canaan had renounced idolatry, and submitted to slavery or emigration, they might have been saved from extermination, is strongly confirmed by that passage of the sacred history, which, after relating the war carried on by Joshua against the confederated kings of these nations, and stating that "all the cities of those kings, and the

"kings

What then were the crimes, which, it is asserted in the Mosaic history, drew down upon the

" kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the " edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed them, as Moses " the servant of the Lord commanded;" adds this remarkable observation: * " Joshua made war a long time with all these " kings: there WAS NOT A CITY THAT MADE PEACE WITH " THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, save the Hivites, the inhabi- " tants of Gibeon: all other they took in battle. For it was " of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they might come " against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, " and that they might have no favour, but that he might " destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses." This passage evidently implies, that it was in the power of these nations, by accepting peace, to escape extermination; but that they were permitted to harden their hearts against all the wonders of divine Providence in behalf of the Jews, and by this obstinacy exposed to suffer the full weight of that punishment which their crimes deserved, and which God had denounced against them. All who are conversant in the language of the Old Testament know, that it speaks of every event which God permits, as proceeding directly from him; and describes him as hardening the hearts of those who abuse the divine dispensations, to harden their own hearts in guilt; though these dispensations display a plain natural tendency to soften and reform them.

If this interpretation of the various commands, relating to the conduct of the Israelites towards the nations of Canaan, be admitted, the true state of the question will be, Whether it appears consistent with the divine attributes to dispossess of their country a nation sunk in idolatry and vice, in order to place in it another people, selected to preserve

* Joshua xi. 18. 20.

the nations of Canaan that punishment which the Jews were commanded, nay, compelled by God

serve a knowledge of the true God, and the principles of moral virtue? And if the guilty nation refused to renounce idolatry, or to submit to the settlement of this chosen people, Whether it was inconsistent with the divine mercy to authorize the infliction of the severest punishment, even to extermination?

If, on the other side, we adopt the rigorous interpretation of the passage before us, and suppose the total extermination of the nations of Canaan commanded, without offering them any previous choice of renouncing idolatry, and submitting to the settlement of the Jews, it will remain to inquire, Whether we can reconcile with the divine attributes, this infliction of the severest punishment, in consequence of the long continued and incorrigible impiety and profligacy of this idolatrous race, without affording them at that time any further probation, any immediate offer of pardon and mercy? I am indeed myself persuaded, that this was not the real state of the case. But the commentators who maintain a contrary opinion are so numerous, that I should not think it right to rest the defence of the Jewish Law on the former interpretation, which I adopt, though this is supported by still stronger authorities.

The chief objection to this interpretation appears to arise from the Gibeonites having judged it necessary, in order to obtain mercy, to pretend that they came from a far country; which seems to imply, that had they been known to have formed part of the seven nations, they could not have obtained it. But to this it is answered by Maimonides, that the Gibeonites had in common with the other Canaanites refused the first offers of peace, and were therefore

exposed

God to execute? In the first place, a total apostasy from the worship of the true God; substituting

exposed to the same fate with them; but that afterwards, terrified by the miraculous destruction of Jericho, and the fate of Ai, they determined to sue for mercy, and had recourse to the artifice related, lest their former rejection of peace should be objected to them. Vide Maimonides, Halack Melakim, cap. vi.; also Cunæus de Republica Hebræorum, Lib. II. cap. xx. Another reason why the Gibeonites had recourse to this artifice appears to have been, that they might form an *equal* league with the Jews, which was not permitted to any of the seven nations. This is the opinion of Masius, vide Poli Synopsis in locum. The error of the princes of the Jews, in granting the request of the Gibeonites, appears to have been, in not consulting the oracle, and thus being led to form an equal league with this part of the seven nations, without insisting on the possession of their territory; but the Gibeonites had certainly * acknowledged the authority of Jehovah, and therefore must have renounced idolatry. Vide, in confirmation of this, Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, Lib. II. cap. xiii. sect. iv.

In confirmation of the milder interpretation, which I prefer, Selden de Jure Naturali Juxta Hebræos, Lib. VI. cap. xii. Vol. I. p. 665, remarks, that in the old commentaries of the Jews it is related, that Joshua, before he invaded any of the seven nations, accompanied his declaration of war with a threefold proclamation, which he quotes from the rabbi Samuel Ben Nachman, who says, "Joshua sent "three letters to the land of the Canaanites, before the "Israelites invaded it, or rather proposed three things: "Let those who choose to fly, fly; let those who choose "peace, enter into treaty; let those who choose war, take "up

* Joshua ix. 9.

tuting in his room the sun and moon, and host of heaven, as well as the fire and air, and the other

" up arms. In consequence of this, the Girgashites, be-
" lieving the power of God, fled away, retreating into
" Africa: the Gibeonites entered into a league, and thus
" continued inhabitants of the land of Israel: the one-and-
" thirty kings made war and fell." Selden remarks, " That
" what is here related of the flight into Africa, wonderfully
" agrees with the History in the Talmud, according to
" which, the Africans applied to Alexander the Great, and
" laid claim to this part of the land of Israel, as their pa-
" ternal territory, on this very pretence; and also agrees
" with that ancient inscription in Mauritania Tingitana,
" preserved by Procopius, which declares, that the ancient
" inhabitants had fled thither from the face of Joshua
" the son of Nun. But this emigration of the Gir-
" gashites may not have been universal, as their name
" occurs in the list of the nations who fought against Israel,
" Joshua xxiv. 11." Yet as it occurs only this once, while the other six nations are constantly enumerated as carrying on the war, this mention of them seems a recapitulation of the nations whose land God delivered into the hand of the Jews, according to his promise, Deut. vii. 1, and Joshua iii. 10, rather than a positive assertion of their having been perseveringly engaged in the war. If they fled at its very commencement, this accounts for their being mentioned exactly as they are, before the invasion under Joshua began, in the divine promise that the seven nations should be cast out, and in this recapitulation, but no where in the distinct history of the war; a *coincidence* which strongly confirms the tradition of their flight, and of the cause to which it is imputed, the warning given them

other elements of nature: in process of time deifying their ancestors; and finally, worshipping stocks

them by the proclamation of Joshua mentioned above. If the reader wishes to see the arguments for the milder interpretation stated more at large, he will find them in Maimonides, Cunæus, Selden, and Poli Synopsis, as quoted in this note; the Universal History, Vol. I. p. 531, note *p*; Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, Lib. II. cap. xii. sect. ii. & iii.; Bibliotheca Biblica on Deut. xx. 10, 15 & 16; Patrick on the same texts, and on Joshua xi. 18; also Calmet on the same texts, who states fully the reasons for both interpretations, but appears to lean to the rigorous one, as does Leydeker de Republica Hebræorum, p. 257 & 259: Le Clerc also, in his notes on Deut. xx. 10, &c. adopts the more rigorous interpretation; yet in a note on Joshua xi. 18, he admits, "That if any city of the seven nations "had wished for peace, they might have had it, according "to Deut. xx." Dr. Gill agrees with Le Clerc. Vide also Dodd's Commentary on the above passages, particularly his Reflections on the destruction of the seven Nations of Canaan, annexed to the twentieth chapter of Deuteronomy, with a citation from which I will conclude this already too long note: "Since therefore, as has been remarked, neither "David with all his power, nor Solomon, did destroy this "people, since they subsisted in the country from the days "of Moses, for upwards of four hundred and fourscore "years; since they were so far subdued as to become tri-"butaries of service as well as of money; and since they "might therefore have been absolutely destroyed, because "conquered, and yet were kept alive; it seems to follow, "that these people were not to be absolutely cut off, men "women and children, without mercy, but only were to be "destroyed

stocks and stones and creeping things, idols the most absurd and abominable. But their apostasy and idolatry was not, as some affect to consider it, a * mere *error of judgment*, which called rather for instruction to enlighten, than punishment to correct it: No, it was connected with every vice that can degrade human nature and pollute society; the crimes which it produced are briefly but forcibly pointed out to the abhorrence of the Jews by their divine Lawgiver, as plain and notorious facts. † "Inquire not thou "after the gods of these nations, saying, How "did

"destroyed as nations; and that if any submitted and be-"came subject to the Jews, and relinquished their idolatry, "they were not to be deprived of life. For did none of the "Jews in all this time understand the command? Did "none of their generals or successful warriors understand "that their business was to destroy all these people? Had "they no opportunity, not even when they made them "tributaries; and were Joshua, Samuel and David, such "strangers to the Law?" Vide also Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, Lib. I. cap. ii. sect. ii. and Lib. III. cap. xiii. sect iv.

* Thus Bayle represents it; vide Warburton's Divine Legation, p. 159.; and Tyndal and Bolingbroke frequently. And the intolerant spirit of the Jewish religion is the perpetual object of Voltaire's declamatory and virulent abuse; at the same time, with his usual inconsistency, he labours as vainly to prove it tolerated idolatry. Vide Jews Letters to him, Vol. I. p. 267, compared with 287.

† Deut. xii. 30, 31.

" did these nations serve their gods? even so " will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto " the Lord thy God; for every abomination to " the Lord which he hateth have they done " unto their gods: for even their sons and their " daughters have they burnt in the fire to their " gods." And as their idolatry thus led them to the most ferocious and unnatural cruelty which could outrage humanity, so it encouraged and sanctioned the basest pollutions. The Jewish Legislator enumerates in the black catalogue, the crime against nature, bestiality, incest, adultery, in a word, every crime of this kind which can disgrace and degrade human nature; and adds, " Defile not yourselves in any of those things; " for in all these the nations are defiled which I " cast out before you. And the land is defiled; " therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, " and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. " Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye " commit not any of those abominable customs " which were committed before you, and that ye " defile not yourselves therein: I am the Lord " your God*." The means by which the Midianitish women, at the instigation of a wicked king and a false prophet †, seduced the Jews first to indulge in impurity, and then to apostatize to idolatry;

* Lev. xviii. 24, 25, 30.

† Vide Numbers xxv. compared with xxxi. particularly ver. 16.

idolatry; the * influence of his foreign wives on Solomon, and of † Jezebel on Ahab, afford striking proofs of the necessity of rooting this depraved and impious race from the land in which the Jews were to settle, as a preparation necessary to preserve the chosen people of God from the contagion of their crimes and their idolatry: and explain the necessity of the command so solemnly proclaimed by the Jewish Legislator, so far as it respects the Canaanites: ‡ "When the Lord "thy God shall deliver these nations before thee, "saith the Lord, thou shalt smite them, and "utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no "covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto "them; neither shalt thou make marriages with "them, for they will turn away thy sons from "following me, that they may serve other gods; "so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against "thee, and destroy thee suddenly."

Such were the idolatry, and such the crimes, of the Canaanites, which no examples of previous judgments had been able to correct. The terror of the Deluge had been long forgotten; the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the very midst of the land of Canaan, had been disregarded: the instruction and example of Abraham and the patriarchs had produced no effect. These crimes and apostasies grew with their growth, and strengthened

* Vide 1 Kings xi. † 1 Kings xvi. 31.

‡ Deut. vii.

strengthened with their strength, till at the time of the invasion of the Jews* "their iniquities were full," and their obstinacy incorrigible. In vain did they hear of the divine terrors, exhibited in the plagues of Egypt, the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, the miraculous passage over Jordan, and the overthrow of Jericho. A single nation (the Gibeonites) submitted to renounce idolatry, and court the protection of the Jews. Far from feeling any disposition to imitate their example, this submission roused the rage, and accelerated the confederacy, of the remaining Canaanites against the Jews: "For "the king of Jerusalem sent unto all the sur- "rounding kings, saying, Come up unto me, and "help me, that we may smite Gibeon; for it hath "made peace with Joshua, and with the Children "of Israel†."

The idolatry, the depravity, and the incorrigibleness of the nations of Canaan, being such as we have now seen, can we make it a question, whether the moral Governor of the universe acted consistently with his justice and mercy, in exterminating this people, and planting in their stead a nation, in which the worship of the one supreme God and the principles of moral virtue were to be preserved, and from whence the light of true religion, and the mercies of the Christian scheme, were

* Compare Genesis xv. 16, with Lev. xviii. 25.

† Joshua x. 3, & 4.

were in due time to be diffused over the whole civilized world.

If the Deist objects to the believer in revelation, because he conceives it inconsistent with the divine attributes, that such should be the declared scheme and manifest interposition of Providence in the Scriptures; on the very same ground may the Atheist object, that in the natural course of things, which the Deist contends is regulated by the secret providence of God, whole nations are frequently cut off, and succeeded by those who have destroyed them; and that to suffer such destruction to take place, or allow the conqueror to reap any advantage from it, disproves the justice and mercy of the supposed Ruler of the universe; or rather proves, that no such Ruler exists, but that blind chance, or mere human agency, determines the fates of nations and the course of events. Undoubtedly the Deist will truly reply, that we generally perceive impiety and depravity prepare the way for the destruction of states; and that, though the conquerors sometimes appear little superior in religion or morals to the conquered, yet in the progress of time, we frequently discern * moral good arising from this

* My readers will probably be as much gratified as I have been, at seeing the principle here stated, advanced in

this troubled scene; and, that the various revolutions of nations have contributed in what seems to have been the most effectual method to advance the progress of civilization, morality and religion, and forward the gradual improvement of the human race: while any apparent inequality or severity with respect to individuals, can supply no shadow of objection to the justice and mercy of the Divinity, if we take into account, that all inequality will be perfectly rectified in a future life, for which the present is only a preparatory scene of discipline and trial. Exactly on the same principles does the advocate for revelation answer the Deist, who objects to the extermination of the Canaanites, and the seizure of their country by the Jews, under an express divine command; that in this event Divine Providence acted in a manner strictly analogous to the general course of that moral government, constantly exercised

the most attractive form, and adorned with all the charms of numbers, by the late Rev. J. D. Carlyle, in his beautiful poem written on the banks of the Bosphorus; a scene, as he observes, celebrated "for transactions which embrace the "most interesting parts of human history," and from which the author satisfactorily illustrates the moral deduction here maintained; teaching men to

"Hail that Power, whose gracious will
Wakes the tempest, pours the flood;
Taught by Him, each germ of ill
Blossoms in expansive good."

exercised in the world; with this only difference, that the same measures of divine administration, which in other cases are carried into effect by the secret influence, and, as it were, tacit permission of the Supreme moral Governor, were here executed by his avowed interposition and immediate authority. If, then, the general system of events is not inconsistent with the belief of a superintending Providence, neither is this particular fact. If the divine Governor constantly chastises public depravity by public punishment; and when nations become so impious and immoral, that their further existence is subversive of human virtue and human happiness, destroys them by the hand of some other nation, which is better adapted to forward and assist the views of the Divinity in the melioration of mankind; it is perfectly credible that the same divine Governor should directly assist the extermination of the most signally and incorrigibly-impious and depraved nation that perhaps ever existed; in order to promote, in the most decisive manner, the purposes of the divine economy, by planting in their country a chosen people, evidently protected and controlled by Divine Providence, expressly appointed to be the depositaries and preservers of true religion and moral virtue, and by whose instrumentality all the nations of

the earth have been blessed: blessed by the establishment of the Christian scheme, which, through this chosen nation, was communicated to mankind.

It is necessary thus to take into our consideration the whole purpose and progress of the divine economy, when we would account for and defend the particular part of it we are now considering (the extermination of the Canaanites, and the seizure of their country by the Jews;) because this is undoubtedly one chief reason of the departure from the usual tenour of the divine Government, in directly assisting and authorizing what, in other cases, it only silently permits and secretly controls. The nature of the Gospel scheme required, and its importance justified, a continued and avowed interposition of divine power, to prepare for and introduce it. The establishment of the Jewish nation in this country, and at this period, was undoubtedly an important and essential step of this necessary preparation; and thence it was, that it was affected by the direct assistance and express command of God. This is not taking for granted the divine original of the Gospel in order to defend Judaism; but requiring that the whole scheme of revelation shall be considered together, and not in separate parts, and each part condemned; because, if thus separately

rately viewed, as unconnected with any preceding dispensations, and unnecessary to any subsequent good effects, it would be strange and unaccountable; whereas it is by this connection explained and justified.

But this command, it is said, confounds the innocent with the guilty! "What! command to "leave nothing alive that breatheth. Destroy all "the smiling infants, all the innocent babes*!" No, surely: it is impossible that God should permit, much less command, the innocent thus to suffer. Let us weigh this objection so far as it relates to the sufferers: (how far such a command can be justified as it regards the Jews, we shall consider hereafter.) Now, that God may permit the innocent thus to suffer, is certainly credible, because He constantly does permit it, as well in the regular course of human affairs, as in the progress of those signal and awful judgments, which we do not hesitate to ascribe to a more marked and direct interference of Divine Providence. Guilty parents frequently entail diseases and poverty on their infant children; the felon and the murderer, who forfeit their lives to public justice, sometimes leave their infant progeny exposed to the severest sufferings; and, to take a more extensive view, when the famine and the pestilence,

* This is the language of Paine.

pestilence, those dreadful ministers of the divine chastisement, desolate a guilty land, do they spare the smiling infant and the innocent babe? When the deluge, the conflagration, or the earthquake, reduce to ruins some flourishing city, do not infancy and innocence sink equally with guilt and age into the common grave? Can this be considered as an imputation on divine justice and mercy, except we forget that this premature, and, to our view, deplorable fate, is really nothing more than a transitory shock, which attends the escape of those innocent ones into another and a better world, where all tears shall be wiped from their eyes, and they shall repose for ever in the bosom of their Father and their God? In a word, admit a future life, and all such difficulties vanish at once: deny it, and the entire scheme, not only of revelation, but of nature itself, is an inexplicable enigma. Assuredly then, as to the sufferings of those innocents, whom we may suppose to have perished at the destruction of the Canaanites, we may admit them credible, because they are analogous to the whole course of nature and the tenour of Providence; and we may rest assured, the same divine Power which commanded their infliction, has abundantly repaid them by an eternal recompense. They form therefore no impeachment on the justice or mercy of God.

Thus we have considered how far this part of the divine economy can be vindicated, as it regards the Canaanites themselves; and I trust it has appeared, that the idolatry, pollutions and cruelty, of these nations, were so abominable, and at the same time so incorrigible, as to justify the moral Governor of the universe in inflicting on them the most signal and severe punishments, even to extermination, without affording any longer period of trial, or any immediate offer of pardon and mercy: though there is a strong probability, that, previous to this infliction of final vengeance, an opportunity was given them of accepting the peace offered by the Israelites, on condition of renouncing idolatry, and yielding their country to the chosen people of God, to whom the Governor of the world had assigned this promised land, by a grant as clear as the divine authority from which it proceeded was supreme: a grant confirmed by the most signal miracles, which were certainly known to the inhabitants of Canaan, who were thus forewarned of the divine authority on which their submission was required, and the punishment which would await their resistance.

That this national punishment, provoked by national guilt, should involve innocent individuals, even smiling babes and infant children, is per-

fectly analogous to the general course of Providence, and forms no objection to the justice or mercy of that God, who will assuredly take care to rectify all inequality of this life, at that final manifestation of His majesty, when He shall take to Himself all power and reign, by rendering to every one according to their works.

PART III.

LECTURE I.

SECT. II.—*It is not incredible that God should have chosen to exterminate the Canaanites by the sword of the Jews, rather than by any other means, and that He should have commanded the Jews to inflict such extermination.*

PART III.

LECT. I.

SECT. II.

DEUTERONOMY vii. 2. 4.

"When the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, "thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them—for "they will turn away thy son from following me, that "they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the "Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee sud- "denly."

I NOW proceed to discuss that which, I am well aware, is the most plausible part of the objection to this part of the Jewish scheme. It will still be maintained, that though the expulsion, or even the destruction, of the Canaanites, may have been merited and necessary, yet it is incredible God should command their extirpation by the sword of the Jews; for this would be to sanction plunder and ferociousness, national violence and personal cruelty, by a divine authority. But is it not evident, the advancers of this objection forget, that a clear divine interposition, plainly

plainly requiring a particular act of obedience to an immediate divine command, so materially affects the principle on which that action is performed, the motives from which it proceeds, and the effects it produces on the minds of those who are thus employed by the Divinity *, that it may altogether

* This is expressed, with his usual acuteness and closeness of reasoning, by Bishop Butler, in his Analogy, Part II. ch. iii. on the *credibility, that a Revelation should appear liable to objections.* After clearly establishing this general conclusion, by proving, p. 230 and 251, "We are incompetent "judges even of the constitution of nature, which is very "different from what, before experience, would have been "expected; and such as, men fancy, there lie great objections "against: which renders it beforehand highly credible, that "they may find the revealed dispensation likewise, if they "judge of it as they do of the constitution of nature, very "different from expectations formed beforehand; and liable, "in appearance, to great objections. And thus, as we fall "into infinite follies and mistakes, whenever we pretend, "otherwise than from experience and analogy, to judge of "the constitution and course of nature; it is evidently "supposable beforehand, that we should fall into as great, in "pretending to judge, in the like manner, concerning Revelation. Nor is there any more ground to expect that this "latter should appear to us clear of objections, than that "the former should." After illustrating this principle by a variety of instances most striking and conclusive, he applies it to that part of the revealed scheme now before us, p. 266: "And now, what is the just consequence from all these "things? Not that reason is no judge of what is offered to us, "as being of divine revelation. For, this would be to infer "that

altogether change the moral character of the action itself. A distinction similar to this, is admitted

" that we are unable to judge of any thing, because we are " unable to judge of all things. Reason can, and it ought " to judge, not only of the meaning, but also of the mo- " rality and the evidence, of revelation. *First*, It is the pro- " vince of reason to judge of the morality of the Scriptures; " *i. e.* not whether it contains things different from what *we* " *should have expected* from a wise, just, and good Being; " for objections from hence have been now obviated: but " whether it contains things *plainly contradictory* to wisdom, " justice, or goodness; to what the light of nature teaches " us of God. And I know nothing of this sort objected " against Scripture, excepting such objections as are formed " upon suppositions, which would *equally conclude, that the* " *constitution of nature is contradictory to wisdom, justice,* " *or goodness*; which most certainly it is not. Indeed " there are some particular precepts in Scripture, given to " particular persons, requiring actions, which would be " immoral and vicious, were it not for such precepts. But it " is easy to see, that all these are of such a kind, as that the " precept changes the whole nature of the case and of " the action; and both constitutes, and shows that not to be " unjust or immoral, which, prior to the precept, must have " appeared and really have been so: which may well be, " since none of these precepts are contrary to immutable " morality. If it were commanded, to cultivate *the principles,* " *and act from the spirit of treachery, ingratitude, cruelty*; " the command would not alter the nature of the case or of " the action, in any of these instances. But it is quite other- " wise in precepts, which require only the doing of an external " action: for instance, taking away the property or life of " any.

admitted uniformly in common life. If an individual, hurried on by ferocious resentment, and unsanctioned

" any. For men have no right to either life or property, but " what arises solely from the grant of God: when this grant " is revoked, they cease to have any right at all, in either: " and when this revocation is made known, as surely it is " possible it may be, it must cease to be unjust to deprive " them of either. And though a course of external acts, " which without command would be immoral, must make " an immoral habit; yet a few detached commands have no " such natural tendency.

" I thought proper to say thus much of the few Scripture " precepts, which require, not vicious actions, but actions " which would have been vicious had it not been for such " precepts; because they are sometimes weakly urged as " immoral, and great weight is laid upon objections drawn " from them. But to me there seems no difficulty at all in " these precepts, but what arises from their *being offences:* " i. e. from their being liable to be perverted, as indeed " they are, by wicked designing men, to serve the most " horrid purposes; and, perhaps, to mislead the weak " and enthusiastic. And objections from this head are not " objections against Revelation; but against the whole " notion of religion, as a trial; and against the general con- " stitution of nature." On this subject of a state of trial, vide Butler, Part I. ch. iv & v.

Equally important is the observation of the celebrated Cumberland on this subject, in the twenty-fourth section of the Prolegomena to his profound and comprehensive work on the Law of Nature, p. 29 and 30; in which, after having previously reduced all the precepts of that Law to one general principle, even the " steady pursuit of the " common

unsanctioned by public authority, avenges the wrong he has sustained, by inflicting death upon his

" common good of the whole system of rational beings, as " far as it in our power," he observes among the various advantages arising from this simplification, that it enables us to deduce that subordination amongst the various particular laws of nature, according to which, that of prior obligation frequently limits the application of an inferior precept; he proceeds, " Ex hoc ordine inter leges naturæ, " quo speciales omnes generali subordinantur, et illarum " posteriores prioribus, commodissime ostendi posse videtur, " de illarum nullâ unquam a Deo dispensatum esse; sed in " iis casibus, in quibus posterioris obligatio tolli videatur, ma- " teriam ita mutari ut priori tantum legi observandæ locus " sit. Sic patet non dispensari de lege dominiorum divi- " sionem stabiliente, et alieni invasionem prohibente; si " Deus licitum faciat Israelitis, Cananæorum in ipsum de- " linquentium terram invadere. Quippe eadem illa lex de- " cernit, necesse esse ad bonum commune, ut Deo imprimis " tribuatur dominium illud eminens in omnes et omnia, " cujus vi ipse, quoties ad summum finem conducere videbi- " tur, auferre potest dominium cujusvis creaturæ in suam " vitam ac bona, et illud in alteram transferre per idonea " voluntatis suæ signa: quod in casu proposito factum fuisse " legimus; unde Israelitæ sua sibi vendicabant, non aliena " invadendi potestatem accipiebant. Pariter etiam non dis- " pensatur de lege quæ propter bonum commune vetat inno- " centibus nocere, si quando jubeatur innocens, (cum ad " hunc finem necessarium est) periculum noxæ, ipsamve " mortem subire; Deo præsertim voluntatem suam hac in re " satis aperte indicante. Hinc enim et Deo omnium regi " suus defertur honos, et aptissime (quia secundum ipsius " judicium)

his enemy, we stigmatize him as a murderer; but if a criminal is convicted of atrocious guilt, condemned by the solemn decision of the Law, and the execution of the sentence committed to the minister of public justice, the infliction of death in this case is a duty, not a crime. Now what we contend for is, that with regard to the Canaanites, the Jews stood exactly in the relation of ministers of justice, plainly commanded, nay irresistibly impelled by the Supreme Ruler of the world, to execute upon that nation His solemn sentence of confiscation and death. They obeyed this command of necessity, driven by the terror of immediate and severe punishment

" judicium) summo fini consulitur." Vide also Grotius de Jure Belli et Pacis, as quoted in the last note. But Grotius, Cumberland and Butler, appear shallow reasoners to such writers as Messrs. Tyndall and Morgan, Chubb and Bolingbroke, Voltaire and Paine, and narrow-minded bigots to Dr. Geddes, who, to the assertion that God could dispense with any moral law, by giving authority in a special instance, to take away the life or property of any human being, declares, " I might obstinately deny this assertion, " and maintain that he could not without being unjust; " nor do I see what solid argument could be adduced to prove " the contrary." Vide Critical Remarks, p. 423. It is to be hoped, few will be found to imitate this obstinacy of the Doctor's: to affirm that God cannot without injustice authorize the infliction of punishment on guilt, is a discovery in natural religion so *novel*, it ought to be maintained with *diffidence*, not *obstinacy*.

ment from God, if in the smallest item they relaxed the rigour of the sentence. On their first approach to the land of Canaan, their inspired Lawgiver had commanded them immediately to attack it: but the people, distrusting the divine power, proposed to send spies to view the land; who reported that the people "were great and "tall, and the cities walled up to heaven*." This completely terrified the unwarlike Jews: they were seized with the most unmanly, and, in their situation, impious panic†. At this moment of mad rebellion, from infidelity and cowardice combined, the glory of the Lord appeared. "As I "live, saith the Lord, all this evil congregation, "that are gathered together against me, in this "wilderness, they shall be consumed, and there "they shall die." And to confirm this menace, the ten spies, who had brought this evil report upon the land, died instantly by a plague before the Lord; but Joshua and Caleb lived still. Astonished at the appearance of the divine glory, appalled by the instant punishment of the spies who had misled them, shocked at the idea of wandering forty years in the wilderness, and there perishing, they mourned greatly, and said, "We "have sinned against the Lord; we will go up "and fight as the Lord commanded us. But the "Lord

* Compare Numb. xiii. & xiv. with Deut. i. from ver. 19.

† Vide Part I. Lect. v. Vol. I. p. 138.

" Lord would not be entreated. Moses said, Go " not up, for the Lord is not among you, and ye " shall fall by the sword." Again obstinate and rebellious, they went up presumptuously; but Moses and the Ark of God departed not out of the camp; and the Canaanites smote them and discomfited them. Convinced by such decided experience of their total dependence on the God of Hosts, they submitted to his power: forty years they continued to wander in the wilderness, without making another effort, either to return into Egypt or to invade Canaan. And now, when of all that generation who had distrusted the Divine Power not one survived, save the pious and intrepid Joshua and Caleb, " For the hand " of the Lord was against them to consume them," the host of Israel is again commanded to go up and take possession of the promised land, under the express condition of their consuming all the people which the Lord their God should deliver them. * " The Lord thy God," says the Law-giver, " shall deliver them unto thee, and shall " destroy them with a mighty destruction, until " they be destroyed. And he shall deliver their " kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy " their name from under heaven: there shall no " man be able to stand before thee, until thou " have

* Deut. vii. 23—25.

" have destroyed them. The graven images of " their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt " not desire the silver nor the gold that is on " them, nor take it unto thee for it is an abo- " mination to the Lord thy God." On these conditions, and under this command, they approach the river Jordan; it is miraculously divided to make way before them; they encamp before Jericho, which is pronounced accursed *, or rather devoted to the Lord: " Even it, and " all that are therein. And keep ye," says their inspired Judge, " from the accursed thing, lest " ye make yourselves a curse when ye take of the " accursed thing, and make the camp of the " Lord a curse, and trouble it. Only the silver " and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are " consecrated unto the Lord; they shall come into " the treasury of the Lord." Thus was Jericho placed under a solemn anathema: its walls, otherwise impregnable, are miraculously and in a moment levelled to the ground, so that the people " went up into the city, every man straight before " him, and they took the city."

Now, I ask, are we to consider their conduct in such circumstances as the result of their own natural unbiassed choice, or as the conduct of men feeling themselves under the direct control of Omnipotence? Are we to impute it to a spirit of

* Joshua vi. 17—19.

of cruelty, that in this instance they utterly destroyed all that was in the city with the edge of the sword, according to the divine command? Or was it a spirit of plunder that instigated them to destroy not only the inhabitants, but the spoil, the sheep and oxen; in a word, to burn the city and all that was therein? Only the silver and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, they brought into the house of the Lord. Assuredly they were impelled neither by cruelty nor by avarice; they acted not from the common feelings, or in the usual manner, of human conquerors; they felt themselves bound to obey the Lord God of Hosts, whose sentence they executed, and by whose power they conquered.

Let us now mark the sequel. A single individual * transgressed the divine command, by obedience to which only they could hope for success. The divine support was therefore withdrawn; and though the next enemies whom they encountered, were apparently so inconsiderable that they despised them, yet "They fled before the "men of Ai: and the hearts of all the people "melted like water." Even Joshua was heart-struck with terror, "and rent his clothes, and fell "upon his face before the Lord, he and all the "elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. "And

* Joshúa vii. 18.

" And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, where-
" fore hast thou brought this people at all over
" Jordan, to deliver us into the hands of the Amo-
" rites, to destroy us? For the Canaanites, and all
" the inhabitants of the land, shall hear of us, and
" shall environ us round, and cut off our name
" from the earth. And the Lord said, Get thee
" up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?
" Israel hath sinned, and hath transgressed my
" covenant which I commanded them: they have
" even taken of the accursed thing, and have also
" stolen, and have put it amongst their own stuff.
" Therefore the Children of Israel could not stand
" before their enemies, because they were accursed.
" Neither will I be with you any more, except ye
" destroy the accursed thing from among you.
" Up, sanctify the people: and on the morrow the
" Lord will by lot take first the tribe, next the
" family, and lastly, the man who hath taken the
" accursed thing: and he shall be burnt with fire,
" and all that he hath, because he hath taken the
" accursed thing." The solemn inquisition is made; the lot is cast; the criminal is found; he confesses that he had taken part of the spoil of Jericho, even gold and silver and raiment, and that they were hid in his tent: they are found; the congregation stone the criminal, and burn him with fire. Now the Lord is reconciled; victory again crowns the host of Jehovah, the elements

of

of heaven war for Israel; and in a great battle more of their opponents fall by hailstones of supernatural magnitude than by the sword.

After all these proofs of a divine interference, could the Jews avoid being fully convinced that their God, the omnipresent and all-powerful Lord of heaven and earth, had commanded the extermination of the Canaanites; or could they venture to dispute the command? Let us then reflect on the feelings which must have influenced them while acting under this command, the natural effects it may have produced on their moral character and conduct, and the probable reasons, why such a mode of executing the divine judgments formed a part of the Jewish dispensation.

In the first place, is it not evident that the Jews, considering themselves as nothing more than instruments in the hands of Jehovah, to execute his sentence on the condemned nations of Canaan, were not actuated by any of those depraved motives which almost universally attend the prosecution of war? The whole series of events which occurred while they were thus obeying the plain mandate, or rather yielding to the resistless impulse of Omnipotence, was a continued trial of their humble reliance on the divine protection, their confidence in the divine promises, and their submission to the divine will; to which they were to sacrifice every personal indulgence, and sub-

jugate every passson of their soul. The thirst of plunder, and the indulgence of licentious desires, are too frequently the most powerful stimulus to war and conquest, with the bulk of every soldiery: but with the Jews, these motives were on this occasion wholly set aside. The entire spoil however rich, the captives however numerous or desirable, were wholly devoted to the Lord, condemned to destruction, with the city or people to whom they belonged. Avarice and licentiousness therefore were checked, not cherished, by this system in the Jewish people: they acted not from their own choice, they indulged not their own desires, they merely obeyed the immediate direction of Almighty Power, not daring either to destroy or to show mercy, to consume or to spare, any thing animate or inanimate, but according to the strict letter of the divine instructions.

Further, as all avaricious and licentious propensities were upon this occasion checked and disappointed, so it is scarcely to be conceived that, circumstanced as the Jews were, sanguinary passions could find access to their minds, or be cherished and encouraged from the part they were compelled to act. The greatest care was taken to mark out the crime of idolatry in general, not the peculiar individuals with whom they were then at war, as the object of abhorrence. Every thing connected with such false worship, animate and

inanimate, was stigmatized as an abomination to the Lord: the image, the altar, the grove around it, the silver, the gold, the houses which were the property of idolaters, as well as the idolaters themselves, were to be utterly destroyed. And, in order that the feelings of detestation and abhorrence might be inseparably associated with the crime of idolatry, not with the persons of the Canaanites; in order to prove to the Jews that they were commanded to exterminate the seven nations, not from any principle of personal resentment or national hostility, but merely as criminals condemned by God; they were solemnly bound to exercise exactly the same severity towards any of their own nation*, who should apostatize to idolatry. The IDOLATROUS HEBREW CITY, or HEBREW TRIBE, WAS TO BE TOTALLY EXTERMINATED, AS WELL AS THE NATIONS OF CANAAN. If the most beloved brother, or the chosen friend of the Jew, the wife of his bosom, or the child of his hopes, should worship false gods, it was commanded that he should pursue this dearest object of his affection even unto death: "His eye was not to spare, neither was "he to show pity unto him."

Acting under such a system, it seems probable that ferocious passion, personal resentment, and even

* Vide Deut. xiii. and Vol. I. Part II. Lect. III. at the beginning.

even national hostility, could not prevail in the Jewish host, with the same force as in any other conquering army; and if there is in human nature any tendency to pity the sufferings of criminals, where the crime hurts not ourselves, it was probably felt on this occasion by the Jews. Indeed we have decisive proof, that it was with reluctance, and almost by compulsion, that the Jews executed the sentence of divine justice on the condemned nations; because it is certain, that as soon as the terror of immediate punishment on themselves was in any degree withdrawn, they neglected to execute the divine command, they spared the remaining Canaanites, they indulged their own indolence by reposing in peace, or their pride and avarice, by reducing their enemies to slaves or tributaries; and in process of time began to regard them with affection, to court their alliance, to imitate their manners, and finally, participate in their idolatry and their licentiousness.

If then the severities which at first they were compelled to exercise against these idolaters had a tendency to excite in the minds of both parties, sentiments of alienation and hostility towards each other; let it be remembered, that this tendency was useful and necessary; and that these severities, far from being continued longer, or carried farther, than was essentially requisite for the purposes of the

the divine œconomy, would at first seem not to have been carried far enough. If the Jews could not be entirely prevented from mixing with the Canaanites, even by the mutual hostility which such measures as they were commanded and compelled to employ, appear calculated to produce, how instant, and total, and inseparable, would have been the union of those nations, had any milder measures been employed; and how entirely would the scheme of setting apart a chosen and peculiar people, to preserve the worship and the oracles of God, have been defeated. How impracticable would it have been to mark out one peculiar nation, tribe or family, from whom the Messiah might be proved to descend, by whom the word of prophecy might be preserved, and its accomplishment attested. In a word, suppose this part of the Jewish dispensation changed; and it appears probable, as far as human sagacity can determine, that the whole scheme must have been abandoned, or effected by means to us inconceivable. When, therefore, we ask, Why the sword of the Jews was employed for the punishment of the condemned nations of Canaan, rather than any other means? We answer, * that no other mode of punishment could have so effectually guarded

* It has gratified me to find that the reasons here adduced, agree with those of Mr. Cappe, in his Essay on the Idea of Judaism, and his Critical Remarks, Vol. II. p. 221.

guarded the Jews from being seduced by the allurements of idolatry, and involved in all the guilt and profanation, all the multiplied cruelties and impurities, which idolatry necessarily introduced. The degree of alienation and hostility thus excited in both parties, accomplished this purpose of the divine administration as far as was indispensably necessary, with less extensive infliction of miraculous punishment than any other conceivable mode. All the nations of Canaan might have been swept off by a pestilence, and the Jews placed, without resistance, in the possession of their territory; but even with this most extensive destruction of the condemned nations, would the Jews have been equally guarded against the contagion of idolatry, from every surrounding state? Would they have been filled with the same terror of impiety, superstitious cruelty and licentiousness, as when they themselves were compelled to become executioners of divine vengeance for these crimes? Assuredly not. With the strong tendency to imitate the manners and adopt the corruptions of idolatry, which the Jews afterwards displayed, it seems probable that, if this scheme had not been adopted, to alienate them as strongly as possible from its votaries, nothing could have prevented their immediate and total apostasy, but miraculously rendering the surrounding world a wilderness, or restraining the Jewish nation, by some

some uninterrupted and supernatural force, from all commerce with every other people.

Thus wild, unnatural and impracticable, are the expedients which seem necessary to be substituted, when we suppose any departure from what has been the real process of the divine dispensations. Is it not then irrational and unjust, to accuse this part of the divine œconomy as too severe, when it is certain it was barely severe enough to effect the preservation of the word and worship of the one true God, in a single nation? Is it not unjust to charge it with a tendency to deprave the morals of the Jews, when it seems to have been the only effectual method of inspiring them with a detestation of all the foulest crimes to the seduction of which they were most exposed, and impressing a fearful apprehension of the punishment which must attend their perpetration?

But the punishment of the Canaanites by the sword of the Jews, rather than by any other mode, seems to have promoted the objects of the divine œconomy, not only by rendering it more practicable to keep the chosen people a separate race, alienated from the society and guarded against the seductions of idolaters, but by PREPARING THE WAY, FOR TERMINATING THE MIRACULOUS INTERPOSITION UNDER WHICH IT HAD BEEN NECESSARY TO DISCIPLINE THE JEWISH NATION, leaving at the same time such deep and awful

awful impressions on their mind, as ought to preserve them permanently obedient to the divine Law.

The great support of idol worship was the fixed opinion, that the idols of each nation were its faithful guardian gods, securing its temporal prosperity, and above all, its success in war; combating on the side of their votaries, with an effect proportioned to the power of their supposed divinity, and establishing the value of their protection by the greatness of the victories they achieved. This strong principle of idolatrous seduction nothing could so effectually counteract, as the abundant experimental proof which the Jews received, that the ONE ONLY TRUE GOD, JEHOVAH, their guardian God, and immediate sovereign Lord, was in this, as in every other respect, decidedly superior to all the Gentile idols confederated together; and, that as He had promised to be "an enemy to their enemies, and an "adversary to their adversaries," so He was able effectually to fulfil his promise of "sending his "fear before them, and destroying all the people "to whom they should come, and making all "their enemies turn their backs unto them*." And as their confidence in the divine protection was thus established, by their being made the instruments of exterminating the Canaanites, more than it

* Exod. xxiii. 27.

it could have been by any other possible mode of effecting their settlement in the promised land; so by the very same dispensation was a salutary terror impressed upon them, preparing them for being governed without any further continued miraculous interposition. Their God had denounced against them, that if they forsook his worship and violated his Law, he would cause them to be * "smitten before their enemies; "that they should go out one way against them, "and flee seven ways before them: and that they "should be removed into all the kingdoms of "the earth." They now clearly perceived the full power of God to execute this dread denunciation; they *now felt practically and decisively the power of* JEHOVAH *to make man the instrument of punishing idolatry, however previously unwilling*, or *apparently unable, to inflict this punishment:* they were now experimentally convinced, that no military superiority of multitude or discipline could protect them from the sword of their enemies, or preserve their nation from total destruction, if they forsook the covenant of their God. Hence, after their settlement in the land of Canaan, the terror which the hostility of the surrounding nations inspired was fitted to become the principal check to restrain them from idolatry; they were prepared to recognise in their defeats

* Deut. xxviii. 25.

defeats the effect of divine displeasure, and the arm of man was fitted to become the instrument of that punishment which their God might determine to inflict. Thus the scheme of discipline and correction which Divine Wisdom judged it necessary to exercise over his chosen people, was conducted by a system which was easily connected with the common course of events, and assimilated to and blended with the general, and, as it were, natural progress of the providential administration of human affairs.

In this view, the punishment of the Canaanites by the sword of the Jews, rather than by any other means, seems a *necessary part* of the divine œconomy; and the event proves, that the rigour and extent of that punishment were not *greater* than the objects of that œconomy indispensably required; for if the dreadful example thus exhibited in all its terrors to the Jews, and imprinted, one would suppose, indelibly on their hearts, was yet insufficient to prevent them from yielding frequently to the seductions of idolatry, what must have been the result, had no such severity of discipline been employed? Assuredly the exclusive worship of Jehovah could not have been preserved beyond a single generation, or restored by a less signal or prolonged display of miracles, than that which was first employed to establish it. Now, either the total abolition of true religion, or its

its repeated restoration by such repeated and continued interruptions of the course of nature, and the regular tenour of the providential government of man, seem utterly inconsistent with the purposes of the divine dispensations.

The TREATMENT OF THE AMALEKITES has also been considered as a great difficulty. Much of what has been said as to the treatment of the Canaanites applies to it; but it has its particular circumstances, which it becomes necessary briefly to consider.

The first notice of the Amalekites is in Exodus, where it is said, * "Then came Amalek, and "fought with Israel in Rephidim," Their miraculous defeat is there recorded, and the monument which Moses set up to preserve the memory of it, and the order of God concerning it. "And "the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a "memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears "of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remem-"brance of Amalek from under heaven. And "Moses built an altar, and called the name of it "JEHOVAH-NISSI†; for he said, Because the Lord "hath

* Exod. xvii, from 8 to the end.

† "The Lord my banner." The next verse ought, as seems to me, to be translated, "For he said, Because the "hand of the Lord shall be for ever upon the banners of "war against Amalek." This translation is justified, by changing כס, "a throne," into נס "a banner:" the alteration was

" hath sworn, that the Lord will have war with " Amalek from generation to generation." But in the recapitulation * of this history, Moses mentions the particulars, which prove this to have been an hostility on the part of the Amalekites totally unprovoked, and attended with very aggravating circumstances. " Remember," says he, " what " Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye " were come forth out of Egypt; how He *met* † " thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of " thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when " thou wast faint and weary; and HE FEARED " NOT GOD. Therefore it shall be, when the Lord " thy God hath given thee rest from all thine " enemies round about, in the land which the " Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to " possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven: thou " shalt not forget it."

Here then, the divine command to exterminate Amalek as a nation, is grounded, first, on their conduct towards the chosen people of God. They had displayed in their attack on them, a spirit of unprovoked

was proposed by Houbigant, and seems preferable to any other. These readings proposed by Le Clerc in locum, and by Shuckford, Vol. III. p. 31, seem, though ingenious, not so natural. Vide Dodd's note on the passage.

* Deut. xxv. 17.

† In 1 Samuel xv. 2. it is " how he laid wait for him in the way."

unprovoked, cruel, treacherous and inveterate hostility. It was unprovoked, because there appears no reason to believe that the Jews had the remotest intention of either injuring their persons or seizing on their territory; which does not appear to have formed * any part of that land of which the Jews were commanded by God to take possession. Accordingly we never find the Amalekites mentioned among the nations who were to be expelled from the promised land. It was a cruel, treacherous and inveterate hostility, because they attacked the Jewish host, as appears, by surprise, so as to cut off the hindmost, who were feeble and weary and faint: and surely an enemy acting in such a manner as this, might at that time have been regarded as an inveterate and malignant foe, whose destruction might be considered as almost necessary to the safety of those whom they attacked. But this was not the chief cause of the doom denounced against them; it was not so much the cruelty of their conduct, as the *impiety of their motive*, which drew down upon them the divine vengeance: "THEY FEARED "NOT

* Vide Patrick on Exod. xvii. 8, and Deut. xxv. 17, &c. Universal History, Vol. I. p. 318. Most commentators consider these Amalekites as the descendants of Esau, who would therefore, but for their own misconduct, have enjoyed the same exemption from all attempts of the Jews on their territory, as the children of Edom. Vide Deut. ii. 5. But this seems uncertain.

"NOT GOD." The Amalekites could not but have known the signs and wonders, by which Jehovah had rescued his chosen people from Egyptian slavery, and declared himself openly their guardian God. They must particularly have known the recent destruction of the Egyptian host in the Red Sea. But the Amalekites, notwithstanding all this, "feared not the God of the "Jews:" they set themselves voluntarily and audaciously in direct defiance of the power of Jehovah, and this at a period when this kind of opposition was peculiarly repugnant to the purposes of the divine dispensations; for we are informed, that "God led not his people through "the way of the land of the Philistines, although "that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure "the people repent when they see war, and return "to Egypt*." Under these circumstances, the unprovoked, inveterate and presumptuous attack of the Amalekites, must have been considered both by them and the Jews, as a direct insult to the majesty of Jehovah, in his character of peculiar guardian and immediate Lord of this chosen people. It was not consistent with the purposes of the divine œconomy to vindicate the honour of Jehovah by any general punishment of the Amalekites at that time: their attack was repelled, but not retaliated, nor was their territory invaded.

This

* Exod. xiii. 17.

This contemptuous defiance of the power and majesty of God would therefore have appeared to escape with impunity, if no further notice had been taken of it; a circumstance which might have degraded the Deity in the estimation of the Jews, who judged of his power, as all other nations then judged of their guardian gods, by his vigour and promptitude in defending his people and punishing their enemies. This seems to be a reason why God judged it necessary to announce to the Jews, that though he would not at present punish the insult of the Amalekites, he yet would not suffer it to pass finally unpunished; but that he would authorize and employ them to inflict, at a remote period, the punishment it merited; thus impressing the Jews themselves with the salutary conviction, that where the Majesty of Jehovah was insulted, * *present delay of punishment afforded no presumption of final impunity.*

In addition to this I would remark, that this sentence was a prophecy as well as a command, repeated afterwards by Balaam †, and in which the Jews were made the instruments of executing the will of their God, and supplied with a striking proof of the divine foreknowledge of their legislator, which being recalled to their remembrance 400 years after, when Saul was commanded to carry

* Vide Butler's Analogy, Part I. ch. ii. p. 56.

† Numbers xxiv. 20.

carry this sentence into execution, tended to impress upon them a salutary awe for the authority, and an humble obedience to the precepts, of the Mosaic Law; *a lesson peculiarly necessary at the beginning of the regal government*, which the people had called for from a certain degree of impatience under that theocracy which God by Moses had established. "When," says Samuel, "ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of "Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, "Nay, but a king shall reign over us; when the "Lord your God was your king. Now therefore, "behold the king whom ye have chosen, and "whom ye have desired; and behold, the Lord "hath set a king over you. If ye will fear the "Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice, and "not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, "then shall both ye, and also the king that "reigneth over you, continue following the Lord "your God. But if ye will not obey the voice "of the Lord, but rebel against the command-"ment of the Lord, then shall the hand of the "Lord be against you, as it was against your "fathers *." As the great criterion of this obedience, Samuel enjoins on Saul the execution of this command against the Amalekites. They had joined with his numerous and inveterate enemies to destroy him in the infancy of his reign; but the divine aid had given him a victory over the Philistines,

* 1 Samuel xii. 12—15.

Philistines, and enabled him to extricate himself from his enemies on every side: and now Samuel reminds him, * "That God had anointed him "king over Israel," and informs him, that he in consequence required him to execute his judgments on Amalek; and that the Jews might feel they were acting merely as *executioners of the divine sentence*, and that the war was not undertaken or to be carried on from the common motives of conquest, they were forbidden to make any prisoners, or take any spoil. Saul violated this part of the command, saving the king of the Amalekites, and permitting the people to take of the spoil, under the pretence of offering it to God: but Samuel exposes the shallow pretext, for he said †, "Hath the Lord as great delight in "burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the "voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better "than sacrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of "rams: for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, "and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. "Because thou hast rejected the word of the "Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being "king." Thus the original sentence against the Amalekites, and still more its final execution, appears to have tended to impress powerfully upon the Jews, the necessity of obedience to the will, and

* 1 Sam. xv. 1, &c. † Ib. ver. 22 & 23.

and awe for the majesty of Jehovah; and may therefore have formed a necessary link in the great series of the divine dispensations.

This is the light in which this transaction strikes me. Other writers have observed *, and certainly with truth, that the apparent severity of this sentence is greatly diminished, when we consider that the Amalekites continued to manifest the most hostile disposition to the Hebrew nation, by attacking them whenever they had an opportunity, and joining their enemies upon all occasions to oppress and enslave them. † They joined the Canaanites and destroyed many of the people upon their first attempt to enter into Canaan; they, ‡ with the Moabites, went and smote Israel, dispossessed them of the city of Palm-trees, and helped to reduce them to an eighteen years servitude: they also joined with the Midianites to oppress them, and utterly impoverished the Jews by their rapines and plunders, § destroying the increase of the earth, and leaving no sustenance for man or beast; and afterwards

* Vide Patrick on Exod. xvii. 8. and Deut. xxv. 17; also Poli Synopsis, and Dodd; vide also Maimonides More Nevochim, Pars III. cap. xli. p. 466; Leland's Answer to Tindal, Vol. II. p. 36; Chandler's Life of David, Vol. I. Book I. ch. iv.; and Lectures on the Old Testament, by Samuel Parker, sect. vii. p. 122.

† Numbers xiv. 45. ‡ Judges iii. 13 & 14.

§ Judges vi. 3.

afterwards in conjunction with the Midianitish army, attacked them in battle. Under Saul's reign, they continued their ravages and violence; and when he had repulsed them, he proceeded, in compliance with the divine sentence, utterly to extirpate them. Thus from the first step to the last, they appear to have pursued the chosen people of God with a deep and unwearied malignity, originally unprovoked, and never to be satisfied, so that, humanly speaking, they drew their own fate upon themselves. Their conduct being foretold, and their final punishment being authorized by God, can scarcely be matter of surprise, when we consider the peculiar relation in which Jehovah stood to the Jews, as their tutelary God, and even their natural Sovereign: and Dr. Chandler well remarks concerning this order of God, "If he foresaw that the safety of his "people materially depended upon it, the order "was wisely and justly given; and if they were "ripe for that vengeance, with which they had "been threatened above four hundred years be-"fore, and which had been so long mercifully "delayed by the patience of Almighty God, I "presume it was no injustice in him, who best "knows the proper seasons of his own conduct, "and is the best judge of the means and instru-"ments to execute his own purposes, to put the "sword of justice into Saul's hand, and command

" him to cut off those whom he thought fit to
" make examples of, for the numerous vices, op-
" pressions and cruelties, of which he knew them
" to be guilty. Samuel terms them, *those sinners*
" the Amalekites, to denote, that even at that
" time they were a very wicked people; that
" they themselves were ripe for the judgments of
" the Almighty, and that they were punished for
" their own sins, though mention is made of the
" evil conduct of their ancestors; and it had
" been long predicted that Amalek should be
" destroyed."

The observations here adduced, with regard to the treatment both of the Canaanites and Amalekites, may, it is hoped, diminish somewhat that appearance of contrariety to the benignity of the divine attributes, which at first sight they bear; and tend to develop the connexion of these transactions with the entire scheme of that dispensation, of which they form a part. But the true refutation of the objection derived from these events, is undoubtedly founded on that principle stated in pp. 26 & 27, and defended by Butler and Cumberland in the annexed note. Even the absolute dominion of the supreme God over the lives and properties of all human beings, and his power to transfer that dominion to whomsoever his infinite wisdom shall judge meet, by a clear promulgation of his sovereign will; rendering actions performed

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in obedience to that will, not only innocent, but instances of obedience and piety; which, without such an authority, must have originated from unjustifiable motives, and therefore have been deservedly condemned as criminal. To expect that the supreme Governor of the world should, in every instance, disclose to beings such as we are, not only that a particular mode of conduct is certainly commanded, but also all the reasons why it is commanded, is surely most irrational and presumptuous; though, wherever he has thought fit to communicate the reasons of his dispensations, we are bound to trace them with caution, to contemplate them with humility, and to acquiesce in them with gratitude.

It is further objected, that the destruction of the Canaanites by the sword of the Jews, would afford precedent for continued persecution and butchery, under the pretext of religious zeal; and encourage the Jews to invade, pillage, and exterminate all their weaker neighbours, under the pretence of supporting the dignity, and extending the worship of Jehovah. In answer to this, let it be remembered, that the same divine authority which granted the chosen nation the land of Canaan, fixed limits to their conquest, positively restrained them, as well during their approach to the promised land, as after their settlement in it, from attacking the neighbouring nations. The circumstance of the inhabitants being

being idolaters did not justify them in invading any country; they were allowed only to take possession of such territories as Jehovah expressly assigned to them. Thus, in their march towards the promised land, they were strictly commanded to take good heed to themselves with respect to the children of Esau: "Meddle not with them," saith the Lord, "for I will not give you of their "land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; be- "cause I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a "possession*." With equal strictness were they prohibited from dispossessing the children of Moab and the children of Ammon; yet these three nations were involved in gross idolatry. Indeed the whole constitution of the Jews, religious and political, was admirably calculated to check all spirit of invasion and conquest, though it prepared them effectually for self-defence. The whole nation was so busied in agriculture, as to have neither time nor inclination for war; prohibited from multiplying horses, and obliged to assemble three times a year at the place which the Lord should choose, distant conquests and tedious wars were utterly impossible: so that there was no danger the Jews should conceive they had the smallest right to inflict on other nations punishments for idolatry, similar to those which they were made the instruments of inflicting

* Deut. ii. 5 & 19.

ing on the Canaanites; and the entire tenour of their history proves that such an idea never entered their thoughts. This objection therefore is refuted by the direct letter of the Mosaic Law, and the whole history of the Jewish dispensation.

Still it may be suspected, that to employ the chosen people of God to be the instruments of divine vengeance on a whole nation, however atrocious their guilt, had a tendency to train the people thus employed to deeds of blood, to harden their hearts, and deprave their character. It may be admitted, this objection would have considerable weight, if no care had been taken to guard against this effect: but nothing is more conspicuous than the wise and effectual precautions of the Jewish Lawgiver for this purpose. It has been shewn *, that the tenour of the command given to punish the Canaanites, taught the Jews to regard with abhorrence, not so much the persons of idolaters, as the crime of idolatry; while every thing connected with such false worship, animate and inanimate alike, was devoted to destruction. It has been shewn, that the thirst of plunder, and the indulgence of licentious desires, were completely checked and defeated in the Jewish soldiery, by the very conditions on which alone they were enabled to subdue the condemned nations; and that the feelings of national hostility, and personal animosity,

* Vide supra, from p. 37 to 39.

animosity, were controlled and mitigated, by solemnly enjoining the exercise of as great severity in punishing idolatry among the Jews themselves, as they were compelled to exercise against the condemned nations of Canaan; and it is evident from the event, that it was with reluctance, and only by compulsion, they exercised these severities, because, as soon as the impulse of divine control was withdrawn, they ceased to exercise any such severity; and, on the contrary, treated with culpable lenity, and regarded with a dangerous complacency, the remnants of these impious nations, whose total extermination they had been warned was necessary to guard against the contagion of their vices and idolatries. It has also appeared *, from an examination into the established principles and direct precepts of the Jewish Law, that it was calculated to inspire a spirit of universal and active benevolence, even to enemies, as far as the peculiar situation of the chosen people would allow; and that it tended to soften and humanize the soul, by cherishing sentiments of sympathy and tenderness, even to the brute creation.

The laws of war† of the Jews towards all nations

* Vide Vol. I. Part II. Lect. II. III. & IV.

† Concerning these laws of war, consult Josephus's Antiq. Book IV. sect. xlii. and contra Apion, Book II. sect,

nations (the Canaanites and Amalekites excepted) were, for that period of the world, peculiarly humane. No enemy was to be attacked, till peace had been offered: on conquest, only the males who had borne arms, were permitted to be put to death, and even of these they might make prisoners: women and children were protected: female captives were guarded from abuse, and treated with tenderness and respect: all unnecessary waste and havoc were strictly forbidden. Strangers and slaves were objects of peculiar

sect. xxx. In concurrence with the most respectable rabbies, and the general tradition of the Jews, he interprets Deut. xx. 13, only to imply a permission, not a command, "Thou mayest kill (not, thou shalt kill) the males, that is, "the adult males;" or as Josephus interprets it, "Those "who had borne arms against them," which at that time included all the adult males. Compare 2 Kings, vi. 22, which, however interpreted, shews an instance of mercy to prisoners by express divine authority. Selden, de Jure Gentium apud Hebræos, Lib. VI. cap. xvi. Vol. I. p. 673, quotes various authorities to shew the Jews were authorized to spare all prisoners who would become proselytes (even of the seven nations,) as there would then be no danger of learning abominations from them; Deut. xx. 18: and he proves it was an ancient tradition among the Jews, that in besieging a city, an interval was to be left, to give the besieged an opportunity of escaping. For the treatment of female captives, consult Philo de Charitate, p. 547. And on the Laws of War, vide Jews Letters to Voltaire, Vol. II. Letter III.; and Leland's Answer to Morgan, ch. iv.

peculiar attention in the Mosaic Law, and their interests and rights guarded with the most tender humanity. "Thou shalt not oppress a stranger," says the Law, "for ye know the heart of a stranger, "seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless "child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they "cry at all unto me, saith the Lord, I will surely "hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, "and I will smite you with the sword; and "your wives shall be widows, and your children "fatherless. If thou meet thine enemy's ox or "his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it "back to him again. If thou see the ass of him "that hateth thee lying under his burden, and "wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely "help with him*." Thus also the most sacred ordinances of religion, were stated to have a reference to the comforts of the poor, and the ease even of inferior animals. When the land was to rest each Sabbatic year, the Lawgiver assigns as a reason, "Ye shall let it rest; that "the poor of thy people may eat: and what "they leave, the beasts of the field shall eat†." Thus also as to the Sabbath day: "Six days thou "shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou "shalt rest; that thine ox and thine ass may rest, "and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, "may

* Exod. xxiii. 9. xxii. 22.—24. xxiii. 4 & 5.

† Ib. xxiii. 11.

"may be refreshed*." "Thou shalt not muzzle the "ox that treadeth out the corn†. If a bird's nest "chance to be before thee, and the dam sitting "upon her young, thou shalt not take the dam "with the young; thou shalt in any wise let the "dam go, that it may be well with thee, and "that thou mayest prolong thy days‡." These were precepts inculcating humanity to the most helpless of inferior animals, with an anxiety and solemnity unparalleled, I do not hesitate to say, in any code of laws ancient or modern. And shall we, notwithstanding all this, stigmatise the Jewish system as sanguinary and cruel; because under an express divine command, and for the important purposes of establishing in one chosen people the worship of the true God, and the principles of pure morality, and, above all, for the purpose of preparing for the Gospel scheme, it commanded the extermination of one impious, polluted and cruel nation; thus inculcating the horror of idolatry on the Jews, who were to be treated with similar severity for similar crimes; thus also proving the superiority of Jehovah over the idols of Canaan, and the terrors of the divine wrath against the vices pursued with such signal vengeance, in the only way at once intelligible and impressive, amidst a people dull and worldly-minded, seldom extending their views beyond temporal rewards and

* Exod. xxiii. 12. † Deut. xxv. 4. ‡ Ib. xxii. 6.

and punishments, and who by these means only could be disciplined and controlled, so as afterwards to be governed in a mode coincident with the general course of divine administration? Surely to neglect the various circumstances which thus explain and vindicate the severity exercised against the Canaanites by the divine command, and on account of these reject the whole scheme of revelation, would be a degree of incredulity and presumption, equally irrational and irreligious. Far be this from us, my Brethren: be it ours to weigh the dispensations of Providence with more humility, and derive, from the severity, as well as the mercy, of the divine administration, new motives to persevering watchfulness and holy obedience.

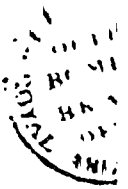
PART III.

LECTURE II.

CONDUCT OF THE JEWS.

LECTURE II.

SECT. I.—*Objection against the reality of the Mosaic miracles, derived from the frequent idolatries of the Jews, invalid—These idolatries did not prove any doubt of the divine original of the Mosaic Law—First species of idolatry by forbidden symbols, &c.—Whence so frequent—Implied acknowledgment of Jehovah—Second species of idolatrous worship, in forbidden places, and with idolatrous rites, implied the same—Third species, worship of idols with Jehovah—Whence—Fourth, worship of idols without God—Yet not an absolute denial of God, or rejection of his worship—Defects and apostasies of the Jews confirm the certainty of a divine interposition, rather than weaken it—Objection against the divine œconomy, from the temptations they were exposed to, unreasonable—Residence of Jews in Egypt considered—And the temptations from the surrounding Canaanites—Degree and duration of the divine interposition suited to the analogy of nature—Mr. Gibbon accuses the Jews, falsely, of being indifferent spectators of the most amazing miracles.*



PART III.

LECT. II.

SECT. I.

CONDUCT OF THE JEWS.

JOSHUA xxiv. 31.

"AND Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and "all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and "which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had "done for Israel."

IT has frequently been asserted by infidels, that the repeated relapses of the Jews into idolatry, at various periods of their history, render the reality of the Mosaic miracles suspicious. For, as these writers conceive, it is not credible that the witnesses of such stupendous miracles, or their immediate posterity, could have so soon forgotten the divine power thus plainly manifested, or apostatized from a religion thus awfully enforced. But these reasoners entirely mistake the nature of this apostasy, and forget the character of the people among whom, and the period when, it

took place*. These relapses into idolatry never implied a rejection of Jehovah as their God, or of the Mosaic Law as if they doubted of its truth. The Jewish idolatry consisted, first, in worshipping the true God by images and symbols; such were the golden calf of Aaron, those afterwards set up by Jeroboam in Israel, the ephod of Gideon, and the ephod, the teraphim and the images of Micah. But in every one of those instances, far from rejecting Jehovah as their God, the images, symbols and rites employed, were designed to honour him, by imitating the manner in which the most distinguished nations the Jews were acquainted with, worshipped their supreme divinities; or they were assimilated to the Mosaic institutions, as far as the peculiar views of their authors would admit. Thus the golden calf which the people compelled Aaron to form, was probably an imitation of the Egyptian representative of Osiris, but certainly intended as a representative of that Jehovah, who had brought † the Jews out of Egypt; as on forming it, Aaron proclaimed a feast to be held to Jehovah. The golden calves, set up by the first king of the ten tribes, were also probably imitations of the Egyptian symbols, with which Jeroboam must have been familiarized during

* Vide Warburton's Divine Legation, Book V. sect. ii. v. vi. 197 to 201.

† Exod. xxxii. 4.

during his residence in Egypt *, for the five last years of Solomon's reign; but certainly intended to represent the same God who was worshipped at Jerusalem, who had brought Israel out of Egypt, and in imitation of the Mosaic institutions; the king ordaining a feast like unto the "feast (of "tabernacles) that is in Judah." And of Micah we are told, that the silver of which the images were made, † "had been wholly dedicated to "Jehovah, to make a graven image and a molten "image." And when he had found a Levite to officiate as his priest, he is represented as declaring, "Now know I that the Lord will do me good, "seeing I have a Levite for my priest." So obstinate was the attachment of the Jews to idolatrous symbols, and so dull their sense of the necessity of worshipping their God in that manner which he himself required. A principal cause of this inattention to the divine prohibitions seems to have been, that the Law was not read, as it regularly should have been, to the people: and when the Shechinah, or visible splendor of the divine glory, had ceased to appear in the tabernacle, and the unsettled state of society, and frequent wars under the Judges, and the permanent hostility between the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, rendered it difficult or inconvenient to meet at that place which

* 1 Kings xi. 40. † Judges xvii. 3 & 13.

which the Lord had chosen, each tribe or family adopted the idea of making a sanctuary in their own city or their own house, and setting up there some symbol of the Divine Presence imitated from their neighbours, as a substitute for the Shechinah, and some rites of worship in imitation of the worship at the tabernacle. But this no more implies a rejection of the Mosaic Law, than the idolatry of Roman Catholics implies a rejection of the Gospel.

The next species of idolatry was worshipping the true God in forbidden places, on high hills and under groves; which it is yet certain did not proceed from any doubt of the existence or divinity of the true Jehovah, but from the same proneness to admire and imitate the superstitions of the neighbouring nations, which we noticed in the former case. Many of these superstitious observances, we find, prevailed during the reigns of Asa and Jehoshaphat, who yet utterly prohibited and strictly punished all direct idolatry *; but could not overcome the rooted attachment of the people to these favourite places of worship: "The high places were not taken away; for the "people offered and burnt incense yet in the high "places." And in another passage we find this remarkable and decisive testimony on this subject: "Nevertheless the people did sacrifice still upon "the

* 1 Kings xv. 13, 14, and xxii. 43. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 17.

" the high places, yet unto the Lord their God " only."

A similar observation may be made on the observance of idolatrous rites, which, instead of implying a rejection of the Mosaic ritual, were, however strangely and criminally, yet not unfrequently, combined with it. Thus we are told *, " fourscore men, having their beards shaven, and " their clothes rent, and having cut themselves," (contrary to the express direction of the Law, yet) proceeding " with offerings and incense in their " hands, to bring them to the house of the Lord." Thus Isaiah † complains, " I will recompense " into their bosom your iniquities, and the iniquities " of your fathers together, saith the Lord, which " have burnt incense upon the mountains, and " blasphemed me upon the hills."

Another and more criminal species of idolatry was ‡ joining the worship of God and idols together; a practice which the principle, borrowed from the heathens, of an intercommunity of gods, sanctioned,

* Compare Deut. xiv. 1. and Lev. xix. 27 & 28. with Jeremiah xli. 5.

† Isaiah lxv. 6, 7.

‡ Vide on this subject Warburton's Divine Legation, B. II. Sect. vi. and B. V. Sect. ii. Vol. IV. p. 212; and Law's Theory of Religion, p. 85. Vide also Mede's Apostasy of the latter Times, Part I. ch. ii. Vol. II. of his Works, p. 772, and

tioned, and the apparent policy of conciliating the guardian gods of Canaan encouraged; but which still preserved the acknowledgment and worship of Jehovah.

"In these principles of intercommunity," says Warburton, "they saw the whole race of man-"kind agree; and from the practice of them in "the worship of tutelar deities, they thought they "saw a world of good ready to arise. But not "only the hope of good, but the fear of evil, "drew them still more strongly into this road of "folly. Their Egyptian education had early im-"pressed that bugbear notion of a set of local "deities, who expected their dues of all who came "to inhabit the country which they had honoured "with their protection, and severely resented the "neglect of payment in all new comers. This "will easily account for the frequent defections "of the Israelites, in the divided service of the "gods of Canaan."

The last and most flagrant species of idolatry was the worship of idols without God. Yet even here they did not so much reject the true God, as

and ch. ix. p. 765. Thus Æneas, on his landing in Italy, Æneid, Lib. VII. 135:—

- - - "Geniumque loci, primamque Deorum
"Tellurem, nymphasque et adhuc ignota precatur
"Numina. - - - - -

Vide also Macrobii Saturnalia, Lib. III. cap. ix. de Evocandis Diis tutelaribus.

as conceive that intermediate and subordinate deities were those only with whom they had immediate concern, and from whose hand they must expect all temporal blessings. In truth, the temptations to some or all those kinds of idolatry were so powerful, from errors in opinion wide spread, and sanctioned by the Egyptians, the wisest, and the Canaanites, the most warlike people in the world, and strengthened by the habitual attachment of the Jews to the idols, the symbols and the rites of Egypt, as well as the sensual allurements of idolatrous worship, and the overpowering terrors of idolatrous superstitions; that we have reason to wonder that the Jews, dull, sensual and stubborn as they were, could by any system of discipline be effectually corrected and ultimately reformed, so as at length to forsake idolatry, as after the Babylonish captivity they certainly did—rather than just cause to suspect no such system of divine superintendence and control was really exercised, because they frequently relapsed into it.

In reality, the defects and even the apostasies of the Jews magnify the divine power and wisdom, which by such apparently inadequate instruments effected the gracious purpose of preserving in the world the principles of true religion and sound morality, when all the philosophic and celebrated nations of the earth sunk every day deeper in idolatry

idolatry and corruption of manners. Had a nation as celebrated for mystery and wisdom as the Egyptians, for literature and genius as the Greeks, for policy and success as the Romans, been made the channel of conveying to us the revelations of God, it would have been difficult to persuade the sceptic that the scheme had not originated in the wisdom and policy of the first rulers of the state, and been acquiesced in, from the admiration with which the enlightened part of the people regarded the system and its authors, and the credulity with which the multitude received a scheme flattering their national vanity, and adapted to their intellectual character and taste. But amongst the Jews, particularly under their judges, the Mosaic Law received no support from any permanent authority, or the influence of any set of men possessing a decided mental superiority; while it was evidently contrary to the sensual appetites and idolatrous propensities of the great bulk of the nation.

But the most remarkable circumstance in the various Jewish apostasies seems to be this, that it was only in their prosperity the Mosaic Law was neglected and violated; in adversity, when reflection was awakened, and seriousness restored, they always cried to their God as the only sure source of deliverance, and as uniformly received the deliverance they sought. Surely this can be

accounted for only on the supposition, that the Mosaic Law was really dictated by a divine authority, and continually supported by a divine interposition.

It may however be asked, Why did God expose the Jewish people to such multiplied temptations to forsake his Law? Why suffer them to continue in Egypt, until they contracted so strong an attachment to Egyptian manners, symbols and idolatries? Why afterwards permit so many remnants of the idolatrous and depraved Canaanites to remain in the midst of them? And why leave them at any time without a regular supreme judge, evidently invested with such plain divine authority as would retain them in constant obedience? To all this it may be answered, that if we could give no solution to those queries, it would not affect the direct proofs that the Jewish scheme was really a divine dispensation; and that so long as these proofs remain unconfuted, it is more presumptuous than wise to insist upon knowing why God did not act differently from what he has done. But though this would be a rational and adequate answer to objections of such a nature, yet in the instances alluded to, it has pleased Divine Providence to allow us some insight into the direct reasons of its dispensations, which we may without presumption endeavour to develop,

develop, in order to the best of our power to "vindicate the ways of God to man."

To the query, Why did God suffer his chosen people to continue in Egypt until they contracted so strong a relish for Egyptian manners and Egyptian idolatries? it may be answered, That when God determined to preserve in one nation the principles of true religion and moral duty, in opposition to the universal idolatry and corruption of mankind, the mode of effecting this purpose, most analogous to the regular course of nature, was, by selecting a particular individual of distinguished piety and virtue, raising from him a family, and from that family a nation, which, by the regular transmission of parental instruction, should be trained up in the principles of their first ancestor; and being protected and disciplined by the peculiar care of Providence, should remain the depositary and example of true religion, until the fulness of time, when Divine Wisdom perceived this sacred treasure might be opened to mankind in general, with advantage and effect. But as all God's dispensations are in a moral way, and adapted to the nature of rational agents, all these methods of instruction and discipline would be so conducted, as to leave human actions in their former state of freedom. Hence this chosen family and people must be subject, like all others, to the influence of

of example, and the trials which the state of mankind in that age would naturally induce. In their progressive increase from a family to a nation, they must, *wherever* they were placed, in a world *universally idolatrous* and depraved, have been exposed to the contagion of irreligion and vice. The objection, that they had been so exposed, would therefore have been equally plausible and equally false, vary their situation as you please; except indeed these objectors to revealed religion, because founded in a miraculous interposition, conceive this chosen family should have been miraculously placed in solitude, and secluded from all commerce with the rest of mankind, till, by a perpetual exertion of miraculous instruction, miraculous civilization, and miraculous support, which such a solitude would have required, they had multiplied to a nation, and thence were miraculously produced, to astonish and reform the world, notwithstanding their total ignorance of the character of those whom they were designed to instruct, and their entire unacquaintedness with, and consequent unfitness to resist, those temptations to which they must be exposed. Such are the wild ideas on which superficial thinkers object to the divine œconomy.

But why, it is asked, was *Egypt* chosen as their residence, the parent of idolatry and superstition? To this it may be answered, that there

was

was no spot in the civilized world where so many causes concurred to prevent the Israelites from imbibing deeply and permanently the contagion of idolatry, or from being seduced by the depraved examples around them, as in Egypt. At their very first introduction into the country they were, as shepherds, peculiarly mean and contemptible, or, as the sacred text expresses it, * "an "abomination to the Egyptians:" and so strong was this aversion, that "the Egyptians might not "eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an "abomination to the Egyptians." Their religion was not less an object of aversion than their profession, for they used, in sacrifice † to God, the same

* Genesis xlvi. 34, and xliii. 32.

† Exod. viii. 26. That the idolatrous worship of different animals amongst the Egyptians was the source of mutual aversion, sometimes even stimulating them to mutual war, we have the testimony of Plutarch, de Iside et Osiride; and of Juvenal, Sat. xv. line 33:—

—— Summus utrinque
Inde furor vulgo, quod numina vicinorum
Odit uterque locus, cum solos credat habendos,
Esse deos quos ipse colit, &c.

And Tacitus, noticing the opposition between the customs of the Jews and the Egyptians, remarks, "Cæso ariete "velut in contumeliam Hammonis, bos quoque immolatur "quem Ægyptii Apim colunt." Herodotus, Euterpe, cap. lxiv. p. 107, 108, notices this diversity of animal worship, and the aversion of some Egyptians to the persons employed to

same animals which the Egyptians worshipped, and thus "sacrificed the abomination of the "Egyptians."

to attend certain animals. And it is possible, from this diversity of sentiment, that Pharaoh might have flocks and herds, and might at the same time wish to employ persons different from the native Egyptians, in the care of them. Yet the testimony of Diodorus Siculus seems to shew, that of the native Egyptians one class were shepherds. Vide Diodorus, Lib. I. sect. ii. In truth, such was the variety of opinions and customs amongst the different inhabitants of Egypt at different times, it is not wonderful much obscurity and difference of opinion should be found to exist in different writers concerning it, which the brevity of the Mosaic history does not dispel. But surely this supplies not the smallest presumption against the truth of the sacred narrative. Vide Poli Synopsis, Le Clerc and Patrick, on Genesis xliii. 32. and xlvi. 34. and Exodus viii. 26; who have collected the various opinions on this subject. Mr. Bryant, in his Observations on the ancient History of Egypt, has a distinct *Dissertation on the Shepherds of Egypt and the Land of Goshen*, p. 140; and, from a minute examination of ancient history, particularly of Manetho and Josephus, seems to account much more satisfactorily than any preceding writer, for the circumstances mentioned in the sacred history. I will conclude this note by citing one passage from him, which contains his chief conclusions on this subject. After citing Exod. viii. 26, he observes, "The abomina-"tion of the Egyptians was a sacrifice of blood; which "offering was so offensive to the Egyptians, that the "Israelites could not venture on it. The offerings of the "Egyptians consisted in the fruits of the earth: on the "other hand, the shepherd's increase was from the fold "only,

"Egyptians." Add to this, that they were placed in a distinct province, where they were preserved a separate body; and what is most important of all, that for a long series of years, towards the conclusion

"only, and his offerings were the firstlings of his flock. "This made the Egyptians dislike shepherds, not their "occupation, than which nothing was more innocent or "necessary. Besides, they had flocks of their own, and "consequently people to tend them. But they disliked "*foreign shepherds*, on account of their different rites and "customs; which hatred must have arisen from an intimate "intercourse, for we do not abominate what we are little "acquainted with. We may dislike at a distance, and dis- "approve; but this was a total abhorrence, it was a general "and national disgust, to promote which, many things must "have concurred. In the first place, the Egyptians were a "fastidious people from the beginning, and held every "nation but their own in low esteem. The Egyptians "(says Herodotus) call all men Barbarians, who do not "speak the same language with themselves. This con- "tempt was carried into disgust, by the contrariety in "their religious customs; and this still heightened and em- "bittered by the tyranny of the pastor kings, and the cruel "usage that the Egyptians experienced from them; par- "ticularly when they broke down the shrines of their gods, "and overturned their altars. Hence arose that fixed "hatred we have been speaking of, which was prior to the "coming of the Israelites; for 'every shepherd was an "abomination to the Egyptians,' before they knew Joseph. "The reigns therefore of the Cusean kings were antecedent "likewise." On these pastor kings, vide Bryant, p. 143, &c. On the situation and fertility of the land of Goshen, vide ibid. p. 154, et seq.

conclusion of their stay, the Egyptians oppressed them with the most cruel slavery; for * "they "made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in "mortar and in brick, and in all manner of ser- "vice in the field;" and finally attempted totally to destroy the nation, by ordering all their male children to be put to death. Surely all this naturally tended to inspire the Jews with aversion to the manners, the idolatry, and the vices, of their oppressors, and led them to accept with joy the promised settlement in the land of Canaan, combined with submission to that system of religion and government which God meant to establish. If they still retained some veneration for Egyptian manners and idolatry, because they were the manners and the idolatry of a great and celebrated nation, the mode in which God delivered them from this land of bondage was calculated to counteract this effect; for they beheld Jehovah with a mighty hand inflicting the severest plagues on Pharaoh and all his people; making the elements and the creatures which they worshipped †, the instruments of their chastisement, and

* Exod. i. 14.

† Vide on this subject Hutchinson's Essay towards a Natural History of the Bible, or Bryant's learned and ingenious treatise on the Plagues of Egypt. I consider the coincidence between these works as a strong confirmation of the truth

and involving the animals, whom they adored as gods, in one common punishment with their deluded

truth of the arguments they adduce, for I am fully persuaded, Mr. Bryant did not know any such observations had been made by Hutchinson. Vide his preface. Idolaters, says Hutchinson, ascribed all power to the machine of the heavens, in the condition of fire, light and air: hence, at the establishment of the Mosaic œconomy, God appeared to Moses in the bush in the form of fire, &c.; hence the multiplied miracles in Egypt shewed the superiority of Jehovah over all the gods of the Egyptians, in their pretended attributes and power: thus the *river* turned into blood, though emblematically sacred; the *wind* brought locusts to destroy the votaries of the wind; the *air* rendered pestilential; the dust of the *earth* noxious; the wind made the waters of the Red Sea stand on an heap; the plague of darkness shewed the absolute power of God over the air; the murrain was on beasts, who were the *representatives* of the *Egyptian gods*, thus destroyed through the instrumentality of that air which was itself considered as divine; thus the first-born had, in many cases, as Hutchinson thinks, been sacrificed to the false gods, and were now in punishment destroyed by Jehovah. Vide Hutchinson, Vol. I. p. 126, and sequel.

Mr. Bryant, without adopting the particular system of Hutchinson, or even (I am persuaded) knowing that he had thus supported it, was led on by his own reflections and researches to form the same opinion, and has established it, as it appears to me, irrefutably, by a variety of facts and illustrations; proving his principle, by shewing its application to every one of the plagues inflicted on the Egyptians: for instance, in the circumstance recorded, that the "fish in the river died," see his proofs of the idolatrous venera-

tion

deluded votaries: "Executing judgment" (as the sacred historian declares) "upon the gods of "Egypt*." Thus chastising superstition in the very country that was its source, and magnifying the majesty of God on the most conspicuous stage then in the world, in the country the most famed for arts and learning, and most frequented by men of genius and curiosity.

It is further admitted, that the system of the Jewish ritual, in various respects, was calculated to proscribe and counteract† the idolatries and superstitions of Egypt. That all these judgments and all these precautions did not produce, upon the dull and carnal-minded Jews, such decisive effects as to root out all propensity to imitate or adopt the superstitions of Egypt, which they had seen admired and practised by this the most celebrated nation in the world, is not wonderful. But surely no human wisdom can presume to assert,

tion in which the fish of the Nile were held, p. 27 to 35; and on the plague of flies, which he also proves were objects of worship, from p. 65 to 84. But, for full conviction, I refer my reader to the Work itself.

* Exod. xii. 12.

† Some instances of this are adduced in Vol. I. p. 258, in the Note. Consult also Witsii Egyptiaca, Lib. III. cap. xiv. from sect. iv, to x.; Lowman on the Hebrew Ritual, Part I. ch. ii. & iii. and Part II. ch. v.; and Grotius on Exod. xx. and Lev. xviii.; but especially Maimonides More Nevochim, Pars III. cap. xlvi. to xlix.

assert, that any other scheme of settlement or discipline could have been better calculated to prevent amongst the Jews the growth of idolatry, and its attendant crimes.

The defeat of the warlike Canaanites, who were * "great and tall, and their cities walled "up to heaven," by the unwarlike Jews, and this by means proving a supernatural interference, had a similar tendency to establish the superiority of Jehovah over all the celebrated idols of Canaan: nor can we conceive any mode of providence better calculated to preserve among the chosen people the observance of the divine institutions.

As to the trials the Jews were exposed to from the example of the neighbouring countries, and particularly from the corruptions of the Canaanites, many of whom they permitted to remain amongst them; it is evident, that *wherever* they were settled in an idolatrous world, they would have been exposed to similar danger, from the depraved examples of the surrounding nations. But it seems impossible to conceive any system more wisely calculated to check such contagion, than that which was adopted in the settlement of the Jews in the promised land. They were previously disciplined forty years, until the generation who had from their birth been infected by the contagion of Egyptian idolatry, and debased by the degradation of

* Deut. i. 28.

of Egyptian slavery, had completely perished, and made way for a more pure, free-born, and noble-minded race, who might be trained under the immediate miraculous control of God in the wilderness, to submit implicitly to the divine direction, and aspire after the divine favour. They were defeated by the Canaanites when they attacked them without divine permission, to make them feel experimentally, that they must ascribe all their future success against them to the protection of Jehovah. The conquest of the promised land was effected by the miraculous assistance of God, who declared, that the Canaanites were to be exterminated in consequence of their idolatries and crimes, and commanded the Israelites to execute the divine sentence. They were punished by certain defeat when they violated, and crowned with certain victory when they obeyed, this direction of their God; until their settlement in the promised land was so far completed, that the few remaining Canaanites were totally in their power, and all necessity for supernatural assistance to their arms, in the execution of the divine command, had plainly ceased.

Thus far Providence had, as it were, *compelled* them to proceed; still however observing in this, as in every other supernatural dispensation, a due analogy to the regular course of nature, and the moral agency of man. "The Lord thy God

(says their legislator) "will put out these nations "before thee by little and little: thou mayest not "consume them at once, lest the beasts of the "field increase before thee; but the Lord thy "God shall deliver them unto thee, and destroy "them with a mighty destruction, until they be "destroyed*." And in another place we perceive an effect of leaving some remnants of the Canaanites, perfectly analogous to the course of nature, assigned as a reason why God permitted it: "That the generations of the Children of "Israel might know, to teach them war: as many "as had not known all the wars of Canaan."

Thus the Canaanites were expelled as rapidly as the nature of things could admit. The Jews were strictly commanded to complete their expulsion, fully empowered to do so, and warned of the guilt of neglecting it; the temptation it would expose them to, and the certain punishment that would await their transgression: but they disobeyed the divine command. ‡ "It came to "pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the "Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive "them out." Or, as their historian Josephus § more fully explains it, "Contenting themselves "with

* Deut. vii. 22 & 23.

† Judges iii. 1 & 2.

‡ Judges i. 28. Vide the entire second and third chapters of Judges.

§ Vide Josephus's Antiquities, Book V. sect. vii.

"with the tributes which were paid them, they "grew effeminate as to fighting any more against "their enemies; but applied themselves to the "cultivation of their lands, which, producing them "great plenty and riches, they neglected the re- "gular disposition of their settlement, and indulged "themselves in luxuries and pleasures." And now the Lord sent an angel unto them, who reminded them of the divine command: * "I said, "ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of "this land; ye shall throw down their altars: "but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have "ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will "not drive them out from before you; but they "shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods "shall be a snare unto you:" or, as it is more fully expressed in another passage †, where the sacred historian relates, that on account of their evil ways, "the anger of the Lord was hot against "Israel; and he said, Because this people hath "transgressed my covenant which I commanded "their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my "voice; I also will not henceforth drive out from "before them, of the nations which Joshua left, "when he died: that through them I may prove "Israel, whether they will keep the way of the "Lord, to walk therein as their fathers did keep "it, or not. Therefore the Lord left those nations, "without

* Judges ii. 1. 3. † Ib. ver. 20—23.

" without driving them out hastily; neither deli-
" vered he them into the hand of Joshua."

Thus God continued his miraculous agency only so long as was indispensably necessary to introduce and settle the Jewish nation in the land of their inheritance, and establish this dispensation, so as to answer the purposes of the divine œconomy. After this, he gradually withdrew his supernatural assistance; he left the nation, collectively and individually, to act according to their own choice, not unnaturally and violently counteracting their moral character, and destroying their free agency. The people, at the rebuke of the Lord, mentioned above, " lifted up their voices " and wept, and they sacrificed there unto the " Lord." " But," says Josephus, " though they " were in heaviness at these admonitions from " God, they were still very unwilling to go to war." Yet though thus left to themselves, the effect of the wonders they had already seen, and the discipline they had been trained under, produced on that generation a *decisive and permanent effect*; " For the people served the Lord all the days of " Joshua, and all the days of the elders that out-" lived Joshua, who had seen all the great works " of the Lord that he did for Israel."

Indeed we cannot desire a stronger proof of the zeal of the whole nation for the observance of the divine Law, than the transaction between the two

tribes

tribes and a half who were settled beyond Jordan, and the remaining tribes; on the termination of the general war against the Canaanites, and the dismissal of the several tribes to their respective inheritance. Here we see the two tribes and a half building an altar at the passage of Jordan, a pattern (or after the pattern) of the altar of the Lord*. The remaining congregation, alarmed at the idea of this being a rebellion against God, who had commanded that there should be only one altar for all his people, prepared to punish it by instant war, but first send ambassadors to expostulate: "Thus saith the whole congregation "of the Lord, What trespass is this that ye have "committed against the God of Israel, to turn "away this day from following the Lord, in that "ye have builded you an altar, that ye might re-"bel this day against the Lord? Is the iniquity "of Baal Peor too little for us, from which we "are not cleansed until this day, although there "was a plague in the congregation of the Lord? "and it will be, seeing that ye rebel against the "Lord, that to-morrow he will be wroth with all "the congregation of Israel." And the two tribes and a half answered: "The Lord God of gods, "the Lord God of gods knoweth, and Israel he "shall know, if it be in rebellion, or if in trans-"gression against the Lord (save us not this day) "that

* Joshua xxii.

" that we have built us an altar; but that it may " be a witness between us and you, and our gene- " rations after us, that we might do the service of " the Lord before him; that your children may " not say to our children, Ye have no part in the " Lord. God forbid that we should rebel against " the Lord, and turn this day from following the " Lord, to build an altar for burnt-offerings, " for meat-offerings, or for sacrifices, besides the " altar of the Lord our God before his tabernacle." So deep was the impression which the judgments of God had made on the whole nation; so watchful their anxiety to fulfil the Law, and avoid the wrath of Jehovah, at once their Sovereign and their God; and so gross is the *misrepresentation of Mr. Gibbon*, * when he asserts, that " the co- " temporaries of Moses and Joshua beheld with " indifference the most amazing miracles." The very reverse of this assertion is evidently the truth.

* Vol. I. ch. xv. p. 457.

PART III.

LECTURE II.

SECT. II.

LECTURE II.

SECT. II.—*THE conduct of the Jews, subsequent to the death of Joshua, is not inconsistent with the divine original of the Mosaic Law—Situation of the Jews under their judges, adapted to the purposes of the divine œconomy—Expediency of placing them in this situation—Severity of the punishment inflicted by Providence for their offences, no valid objection—Establishment of the kingly government a confirmation of the authenticity of the Pentateuch—Why desired by the people—Why permitted by God—Theocracy preserved under the kings—Illustrates the nature of the divine control over the Jews—And of the Jewish character—Both shew the credibility of the Jewish idolatries, notwithstanding the divine original of the Mosaic Law—Separation of the ten tribes an apparent objection—Its origin—Idolatry of Solomon—Inference from it as to the idolatries of the Jews—Separation of the two kingdoms, why expedient—How effected—Its natural tendency—Abused by Jeroboam—Even his conduct confirms the divine original of the Mosaic Law—Schism he introduces consistent with that belief—Gave occasion to manifest the divine providence, in the history of the ten tribes—Effects of this separation on the two tribes—Instanced in the history of Abijah—Of Rehoboam—Of Asa—Of Hezekiah—General reflection on the providential government of the Jews—On the caution to be exercised in estimating the characters described in the Old Testament—And the effects of the Jewish scheme.*

PART III.

LECT. II.

SECT. II.

CONDUCT OF THE JEWS.

IN the former Section we noticed the strong impression which the divine interposition had made on those who were witnesses of them; insomuch, "That the people served the Lord all "the days of Joshua, and of the Elders who out-"lived Joshua, who had seen the great works of "the Lord." That this impression however should not be permanent enough to preserve the Jews from corrupting their religion and their morals, by imitating the idolatries and vices of the Canaanites their neighbours, will not seem wonderful, if we consider that the Jews were, at this period, mere children in moral and religious conduct, as is most evident from the whole tenour of the Scripture narrative. They were very inattentive to the history of past transactions; so that many of the very next generation after Joshua "knew

"knew not," that is, they considered not, and therefore acted as if they had not known, the wonders which God had wrought for Israel. The temptations to intermarry with their neighbours, and adopt their manners and worship, were too powerful for their unsteady and carnal minds: the beauty of the women of Canaan; the pomp and gaiety of their festivals; the voluptuousness of their impure rites; the hope of gratifying their curiosity for prying into futurity, by idolatrous divinations; the overpowering fears impressed on their souls by idolatrous superstition; their anxiety to conciliate the favour of those divinities, who were represented to them as the peculiar guardian gods of the country which they were newly settled in; these and other similar motives, adapted, if I may so speak, to childish understandings, childish feelings, and childish appetites, demanded an immediate and strict discipline to counteract their influence, and preserve amidst this backsliding and unstable people the main principles of religion and morality, notwithstanding their continual propensity to corrupt the purity of both. And we evidently perceive, that the system of divine government exercised over the Jews, under their judges, was exactly adapted to their situation and their moral character; for the sacred history relates *, that "the Children of Israel dwelt

"amongst

* Judges ii. & iii.

" amongst the Canaanites, and took their daughters " to be their wives, and gave their daughters to " their sons, and served their gods, and did evil " in the sight of the Lord. And the anger of the " Lord was kindled against them, and he sold " them into the hands of their enemies, as the " Lord had said, and as he had sworn unto them: " and they were greatly distressed. And when " they cried unto the Lord, he raised up judges; " and then the Lord was with the judge, and " delivered them out of the hands of their enemies " all the days of the judge. And it came to pass " when the judge was dead, that they returned, " and corrupted themselves more than their fa- " thers; and ceased not from their own doings, " nor from their stubborn way." That the government of the Israelites required this occasional interposition of God, in appointing the supreme magistrate, appears, as well from the tenour of the sacred history, as the testimony of Josephus *, who remarks, " That as they got large tributes " from the Canaanites, and were indisposed for " taking pains, by their luxury, they suffered their " aristocracy to be corrupted also; and did not " ordain themselves a senate, nor any other such " magistrates as their laws had formerly required." Here then either the Divinity must have *incessantly* interposed, never suffering a moment to pass

* Joseph. Antiq. Book V. sect. vii.

pass without placing at the head of the Jews a vicegerent supported by all the terrors of the divine power, to restrain them forcibly from yielding to their idolatrous and vicious propensities, thus counteracting their whole moral character; a mode of procedure altogether unexampled in God's government, and indeed it should seem inconsistent with the very idea of a moral governor; or, he must altogether have abandoned them to the influence of those propensities, which would have speedily plunged them irretrievably in idolatry and vice with the rest of the world, and defeated the entire purpose of the divine œconomy; or, lastly, he must have taken that course which the sacred history declares he did, appointing *occasionally* vicegerents, as circumstances called for their interposition; and supporting the authority of his Law, by thus visibly controlling the nation, and proportioning their prosperity and adversity to the degree of obedience which they voluntarily yielded to that Law; and habituating them to look up immediately to his protection, without interposing any permanent human authority on which they might be too apt exclusively to depend, and thus forget their God.

Such was the system of divine administration over the Jews under their judges. Thus the chosen people, who were, as it should seem (like all the nations of that period) mere children in

religion and morality, were treated as children, kept in a state of tutelage under the constant guardianship and occasional correction of their heavenly Father; taught to feel experimentally their total dependence upon his protection; taught to feel that none of their chiefs or elders possessed power or wisdom to govern and defend them, except as they were raised to the supreme authority, and maintained in it by God himself.

That this system was as effectual in securing the obedience of the Jews to the divine Law, as from their situation and character we could reasonably expect, may appear, when we recollect, that of * four hundred and fifty years which elapsed

* It is not easy to be accurate in the statement of these periods of prosperity and good conduct, or adversity and punishment; because that sometimes *part* of the Children of Israel transgressed the divine Law, and were punished *distinct from the rest.* Thus it is recorded, Judges x. 7, 8. "That the Lord delivered Israel into the hands of the "children of Ammon, and they oppressed them eighteen "years, all the Children of Israel which were on *the other* "*side Jordan*, in the land of the Amorites." Something similar to this appears to have been the case in the deliverance wrought by Shamgar, Judges iii. 31; and even the servitude to Jabin, king of Canaan, Judges iv. 2, does not appear to have been universal, though it is said he mightily oppressed the Children of Israel; for it is said, "Deborah "judged Israel at that time." But the following periods appear to have been clearly periods of tranquillity, during which the Israelites lived under their own law.

elapsed from the settlement of the Israelites in Canaan by Joshua, to the first election of a king in

From the time when Joshua took the whole land, and the land rested from war, Joshua ch. xi. 23, about 1445 years before Christ, to the time when God delivered them into the hands of the king of Mesopotamia, about the year

A. C. 1410	35 years.
Judges iii. 11—the land had peace under Othniel	40 ditto.
——— iii. 30—under Ehud and his successors	80 ditto.
——— v. 31—under Deborah and Barak, and their successors	40 ditto.
——— viii. 28—under Gideon	40 ditto.
——— x. 2—under Tola	23 ditto.
——— x. 3—under Jair	22 ditto.
——— xii. 7—under Jephthah	7 ditto.
——— xii. 9—under Ibzan	7 ditto.
——— xii. 11—under Elon	10 ditto.
——— xii. 14—under Abdon	8 ditto.
Under Samuel, at least	25 ditto.
TOTAL	337

Without taking into the amount the forty years during which Eli had judged Israel, 1 Sam. iv. 18, during which the worship of the true God, and the observance of the Law, had been in a great measure preserved, though not perfectly; this would make the period during which the Law of Moses was the regular established religion of Israel, 377 years out of the 450 under the Judges; and it must be recollected, that it was always the religion of probably a great multitude of the people, though the public idolatry of others brought down the judgments of God: and above all, let it not be forgotten, that those idolaters did not renounce the worship of Jehovah, but only added to it the worship of

in the person of Saul, when taken together, distinct from the intervals of occasional relapses into idolatry, above three hundred and fifty seem to have passed under the government of the various judges, whom God raised up at different periods, to recal his people from their errors, and retain them in the observance of his Law; and that during the lives of each of these judges, there was no material apostasy from the national religion, and no material interruption of the public tranquillity and prosperity by these punishments, which always attended such apostasy. It is peculiarly necessary to notice this circumstance, because, by a superficial reader of the sacred history, the whole period under the judges may be easily mistaken as one uninterrupted series of idolatries and crimes; from his not observing, that the lapses which incurred punishment, and the divine deliverances which attended repentance, are related so fully and distinctly as to occupy almost the entire narrative; while very long periods, when,

of idols. They corrupted, but never entirely forsook, their national religion; and such corruption never implied any *doubt* of its *divine original*, or any positive disbelief of the Mosaic miracles. If, with Usher in his Chronology, and others, we suppose the periods of tranquillity above to have been only *partial*, we must also admit the idolatries through the *entire* period of the Judges to have been also partial, and the argument will be unaffected.

when, under the government of their judges, the "people followed God, and the land enjoyed "peace," are passed over in a single verse, as productive of no occurrence which required a particular detail.

The situation of the Jewish nation, during the government of its judges, seems calculated to promote the efficacy of that system of discipline under which it was placed, by the very circumstance which at first view appears most repugnant to it, the want of a close union and common interest between the different tribes. If, on the one side, this prevented them from regularly uniting under a common leader, except when such a one was pointed out by some clear manifestation of the divine will in his appointment, and divine aid in his support, and thus left them, both as tribes and individuals, to do what was "*right in their own eyes**," without any immediate visible and regular control; this very circumstance, on the other hand, enabled the Deity to exhibit more conspicuously the operation of that particular providence, which he had declared should distribute temporal prosperity and calamity according to the degree of obedience or disobedience to the Mosaic Law, which not only the people collectively, but each distinct tribe and family should manifest; and thus gradually imprint more deeply on the whole

* Judges xvii. 6.

whole nation the necessity of obedience to the divine will, by examples within their immediate observance, and the full force of which they could distinctly comprehend. Now the exercise of such a particular providence over a numerous and widely-extended nation, where one supreme government from the very first had uniformly controlled the entire, and rendered each tribe and family less obviously the masters of their own conduct, must have been more gradual and extended in its operation, and less plainly discriminative and observable, than in the situation of the Jews under their judges. This circumstance, though not noticed (as far as I can recollect) by writers on this subject, appears to me to have been the most decided effect, and therefore to supply the most satisfactory explanation of this part of the divine œconomy: and be it observed, that this mode of exhibiting the particular providence of God in the distribution of temporal blessings, was the more necessary, as the Jewish people was the only one which acknowledged the authority of Jehovah, or expected any such administration of providence. All the surrounding nations looked up to their own idols as their guardian gods; and the general superiority of Jehovah over these had been sufficiently displayed in the circumstances attending the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt, and their settlement in Canaan; but it was still

requisite that it should be proved, that merely belonging to the chosen people, and acknowledging the general authority of Jehovah, would be insufficient to secure his protection, except to this was added an humble and vigilant obedience to that Law which God had promulgated, and by the observance of which alone the purposes of the divine œconomy could be completely fulfilled.

That this plan was pursued under the judges, in distributing prosperity or calamity to the different tribes, according to their good or ill conduct, we have many instances. Thus we are told, that * Judah and Simeon went to attack and dispossess the Canaanites who were remaining in the territory allotted for their inheritance; and that the Lord was with them, and gave their arms success as far as they continued their confidence in the divine aid. A similar observation is made with regard to the tribe of † Joseph; while ‡ five other tribes are enumerated, who, indulging their own indolence, or destitute of sufficient faith in the divine aid, would not drive out the Canaanites, but were satisfied with making them tributaries; and the subsequent history shews this was the cause of the severest calamities to these tribes: these nations soon became "thorns

* Judges ch. i. nineteen first verses. † Ibid. i. 22.

‡ Ibid. i. 21, 27, 29, 30, 33.

"thorns in their sides*," the instruments of the divine chastisement, merited by this disobedience, and the subsequent idolatries to which it led.

The history of the manner in which "God "rendered the wickedness of Abimelech which "he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy "brethren: And all the evil of the men of She-"chem did God render upon their heads: and "upon them came the curse of Jotham, the "son of Jerubbaal†," supplies another striking instance of the administration of Providence here supposed. These and various other facts supply additional instances of the same administration of Providence: the apparent severity in some of these instances either arose from the operation of human passions in the agents employed or permitted to execute these judgments, without being miraculously controlled in their conduct; or if directly commanded, we may be well assured was indispensably necessary to effect the purposes of the divine œconomy, when even that degree of severity was not sufficient entirely to prevent subsequent offences. Indeed the objection so frequently, but so causelessly advanced, that the supposed divine government over the Jews was not as completely effectual as might naturally be expected, shews the divine interference

* Judges ii. 3.

† Judges, the entire ch. ix. particularly ver. 56 & 57.

ference was confined to cases of unquestioned necessity, and interrupted as little as possible the operation of the laws of nature, and the regular course of moral discipline, under which mankind is placed. We are entirely * *incompetent* judges *a priori* of the degree of interference which ought to have taken place under such a particular providence as God exercised over the Jews, as well as of the effects which ought to have been produced by it. The existence of such a system is proved by undeniable facts, and its effects have evidently been highly important; and this should satisfy our doubts, and excite our gratitude. To insist on more extensive discoveries of the reasons and process of the divine government is equally irrational and presumptuous.

As the object of these Lectures does not require, and their limits will not allow, a minute inquiry into the whole series of the Jewish history, and the discussion of every difficulty or objection which may appear to arise from it; I shall proceed to point out such *leading* circumstances in the progress of this dispensation, as may illustrate its general tendency to prevent the existence, or check the spread of those idolatries and apostasies, which form the subject of our present discussion.

The

* Vide Butler's Analogy, Part III. ch. iii. particularly p. 260.

The ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REGAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT IN JUDÆA forms a distinguished era in the history of the chosen people. It has been already remarked, that this change had been * provided for in the divine œconomy, having been foretold, in the prophetic declaration of Moses delivered to the assembled nation shortly before his death, in such a manner as supplies a striking proof of the authenticity of the Pentateuch. It was not however established until above 400 years had elapsed, and then with circumstances deserving accurate attention, as they appear to illustrate strongly the character of the Jewish people, as well as the kind of discipline, and degree of control, which the divine wisdom thought fit to exercise over this chosen race.

It is related, that the elders of Israel came unto Samuel, and said unto him, † "Behold, "thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy "ways: now make us a king to judge us like all "the nations." This inconvenience arising from the misconduct of the sons of Samuel was so plainly temporary and easily removable, that it could have been but a mere pretence. The real motive undoubtedly was, that they should be governed

* Deut. xvii. from ver. 14, compared with 1 Sam. viii. x. & xii. Vide also supra, Vol. I. from p. 25 to 28.

† 1 Sam. viii. 5.

governed "like all the other nations;" a motive originating in their not sufficiently attending to the divine interpositions of the judges, but yielding to their ardent and culpable fondness for the manners and customs of the surrounding idolatrous states: a fondness they were restrained from indulging, by the control of that theocracy established by the Mosaic Law; a control which they in all probability secretly hoped would be less strict if they changed the form of their civil government. This criminal disposition God exposes and reprobates: "They have not," says he to the Prophet, "rejected thee, but they have "rejected me, that I should not reign over them. "According to all the works which they have "done since the day that I brought them up out "of Egypt, unto this day, wherewith they have "forsaken me, and served other gods; so do they "also unto thee*." Yet the Divinity would not exercise such a resistless control as totally to disregard the choice of his people, and chain down their free will: this would have been inconsistent with his character as a moral governor. He indeed commands the Prophet solemnly to protest unto them, declaring unto them his condemnation of their criminal desires, and warning them of the various † inconveniencies which should attend the kingly government; yet on their persisting

* 1 Sam. viii. 7 & 8. † Ib. ver. 10 to the end.

persisting in their demand, for "the people re-
"fused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they
"said, Nay, but we will have a king over us, that
"we also may be like all the other nations; and
"that our king may judge us, and go out before
"us, and fight our battles*;" the Prophet is commanded "to hearken to their voice, and set "a king over them." But the mode in which this is done is peculiarly remarkable; the people retain such reverence for their God, and such confidence in their Prophet, that they do not attempt to elect a king themselves, but wait for the divine appointment. In this appointment care is taken to preserve in its full force that theocracy originally established over the Jews†. A king is elected by the express declaration of the divine oracle; raised from an obscure family‡, so that he himself, as well as the entire nation, should know and feel that he derived his authority solely from that appointment§. The rules and forms of the regal government are prescribed by the Prophet, which proves that the executive power alone was confided to this vicegerent of Jehovah, who

* 1 Sam. viii. 19 & 20.

† Vide Warburton's Divine Legation, Book V. sect. iii.; who, in opposition to Le Clerc and others, has (as appears to me) clearly established, that the theocracy was continued under the kings, and even to the appearance of our Saviour. Vol. IV. p. 225.

‡ 1 Sam. ix. 21. § Ibid. x. 23.

who still reserved to himself all legislative authority. Nor is the solemn inauguration of the new monarch completed until God by a miracle had convinced the people of his displeasure at the criminal motives in which their demand of a king had originated; and thus filled them with terror, humbled them to repentance, and led them to confess their crime, and implore pardon and a continuance of the divine protection. * "Now "therefore stand and see," says the Prophet, "this great thing, which the Lord will do before "your eyes. Is it not wheat harvest to-day? I "will call upon the Lord, and he shall send "thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and "see that your wickedness is great which ye "have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking "you a king. So Samuel called unto the Lord, "and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day: "and all the people greatly feared the Lord and "Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, "Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, "that we die not; for we have added unto all "our sins this evil to ask us a king. And "Samuel said unto the people, Fear not; ye have "done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside "from following the Lord, but serve the Lord "with all your heart; and turn ye not aside: "for then should ye go after vain things which "cannot

* 1 Sam. xii. 16. to the end.

" cannot profit; for they are vain. For the Lord
" will not forsake his people, for his great name's
" sake: for it hath pleased the Lord to make
" you his people. Moreover, as for me, God
" forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in
" ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you
" the good and the right way. Only fear the
" Lord, and serve him in truth with all your
" heart: for consider how great things he hath
" done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly,
" ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king."

How clearly does this transaction, in all its circumstances, illustrate the nature of that government which God exercised over his chosen people, and prove how admirably it was adapted to their situation and character! It exhibits, not the overwhelming violence of resistless power, but the steady yet mild control of parental authority, correcting the transgressions of this wayward race with a necessary strictness, and enforcing their submission with immovable firmness; yet attentive to their feelings, indulgent even to their weaknesses, ever ready to hear their supplications, and accept their penitence; and incessantly directing every circumstance so as most effectually to provide for their improvement and their happiness. While in the people we perceive a puerile turn of mind, easily caught by outward show,

show, and breaking * forth into tumultuous applause at beholding the stature and beauty of their new sovereign; anxious to imitate their neighbours in the splendor of a court, and placing their dependence more on the warlike character of their leader, than the experienced protection of their God; yet rather weak and inconstant in their moral and religious character, than obstinately impious and depraved: in the ordinary course of things inattentive to the guardian hand of Providence, but never questioning the divine original of their religion and government, or deliberately rejecting the authority of their heavenly King. On the contrary, when their reflection is roused, and their seriousness awakened by a sensible proof of the divine displeasure †, they, as it should seem, humbly confess and deeply lament their transgressions; acknowledge gratefully the past mercies of their God, deprecate his wrath with heartfelt terror, and engage for their own future obedience, with evident sincerity. Such appears the real character of the Jewish people; such the nature of that discipline, and the degree of that control, which the wisdom of God exercised over them, as sufficient for securing the great objects of the divine dispensations.

Now it seems undeniable, that the various idolatries

* 1 Sam. x. 23, 24.

† 1 Sam. xi. 15, with xii. 4. & 19.

idolatries and transgressions of the Jews, not only naturally resulted from this their national character, but that they are perfectly consistent with the reality of such a divine government, and therefore in no degree diminish the credibility of those miracles, by which the existence of that government is attested; or the divine original of that Law, which was by its authority promulgated and upheld.

It has been already remarked, that the authenticity of the Pentateuch, and, by consequence, the certainty of the Mosaic miracles, and the divine original of the Mosaic Law, derives considerable evidence from the late introduction of the regal form of government in Judæa*. In truth, had this been established by their legislator from the first, it would have been difficult to remove the suspicion, that temporal motives and political arts might have contributed to give a fictitious divine authority to a code of Laws, which an able legislator had contrived, and a series of powerful kings had maintained, as the support of the regal government; while in the present case all such suspicion is precluded, as the Law must have been universally recognized before the establishment of that regal authority, which, though it in a certain degree provides for, it yet disapproves of and restrains. It was not, therefore,

* Supra, Vol. I. p. 25 to 28.

therefore, unproductive of advantage to the permanent interests of religion, that this great change was delayed by Providence until the Mosaic Law had subsisted long enough to prove that its first establishment had not originated in any human policy, and that its subsequent support was independent of any human power: and it has, I trust, appeared, that every circumstance attending this transaction is not only consistent with the original establishment of the Jewish scheme by divine power, but confirms the continued interposition of Providence in its superintendence and support.

The next leading event of the Jewish history, which, in this view of our subject, it is necessary to consider, is the * SEPARATION OF THE TEN TRIBES from the house of David, and their establishment in a separate kingdom by Jeroboam; an event which at first view may appear to indicate a total contempt of the Mosaic Law, since it was attended with a deplorable schism, and idolatrous corruption in the Jewish church; a corruption which, as it was supported by worldly policy in the monarchs, and by the propensity to self-indulgence and idolatry in the mass of the people, was unhappily permanent; for every king of Israel, however praiseworthy in other respects, adhered to the sin of "Jeroboam, who made "Israel to sin." A close attention to the circumstances

* Vide 1 Kings xi. xii. & xiii; and 2 Chron. x. & xi.

cumstances and effects of this event, will however shew, that it is perfectly consistent with the reality of that divine superintendence which directed the Jewish dispensation.

The * origin of this separation is declared to have been a divine judgment on the house of David, in consequence of the idolatrous worship introduced by the foreign wives of Solomon, and criminally permitted or partaken of by that prince. We are however completely certain, that Solomon long worshipped the true God, revered the Law of Moses as divine, and is one of the most clear and impressive teachers of religious truth and moral duty that ever enlightened mankind: yet in the decline of life and of reason, excessive sensuality, inflamed by the long enjoyment of royal power and uninterrupted prosperity, lulled to sleep the vigilance of his piety, and betrayed him into guilt. Says the sacred historian, † "He "loved many strange women, of the nations con- "cerning which the Lord said unto the Children "of Israel, Ye shall not go in unto them, neither "shall they come in unto you: for surely they will "turn away your heart after their gods: but So- "lomon clave unto these in love. And it came to "pass, that when Solomon was old, his wives "turned away his heart after other gods." It is a melancholy

* Vide 1 Kings xi. † Ib. ver. 1 to 13.

melancholy but certain truth, such is the weakness and corruption of human nature, that this narrative is perfectly natural and credible; and surely the crimes and idolatries of the Jewish nation in general were not more incredible or unnatural, on the supposition of their general sincere acknowledgment of the divine origin of their Law, than the similar misconduct of this enlightened and favoured monarch. Certainly no instance can shew more clearly the general futility of this objection. But let us pursue the history. Had this offence remained unpunished, so contagious an example would probably have infected the *whole mass* of the people, which would thus have irretrievably sunk into idolatry and vice: and does it not appear probable, that so *long as the whole nation continued united under one sovereign*, this *danger might frequently recur?* Does not therefore this division of the people under *two* monarchs appear, even to our short-sighted views, not only a just punishment for the crimes of Solomon, but the most probable method of preventing that *universal* apostasy, from similar misconduct in future, which might have entirely defeated the design of the Jewish dispensation? And the more accurately we consider the circumstances and effects of this revolution, the more clearly shall we perceive, that the prevention of such a total apostasy was the chief cause why it was

permitted,

permitted, nay, even forwarded, by a divine interference.

When the prophet * Ahijah was commissioned to announce to Jeroboam his selection by God as sovereign of the ten tribes, he declares in the clearest terms that this was designed as a punishment for the idolatries of Solomon; that it was intended to reserve one tribe for the house of David, in reward of his unshaken adherence to the worship of his God; and that a similar adherence on the part of Jeroboam was the condition on which his kingdom should be secured to him. Thus, in its first origin, this revolution was a providential dispensation. But yet it was not brought about by any resistless operation of divine power; human passions and human agency were, in appearance, its only effective cause. The † imprudent and tyrannic answer of Rehoboam to the demands of the Jewish people for a redress of grievances, at the commencement of his reign, was its immediate occasion: but when the king of Judah made preparations to reduce the revolted tribes, the Divinity interposed to prevent the miseries of civil war, in opposition to a measure originating in his decree, and authorized by his prophet: ‡ "Ye "shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren; "for this thing is from me."

Thus

* 1 Kings xi. 33.

† Ibid. xii. first fifteen verses. ‡ Ibid. xii. 24.

Thus every circumstance attending this revolution had a most direct and powerful tendency to excite in both these kings, and their subjects, a *spirit of pious emulation* in their obedience to the divine Law. But with an impious policy, Jeroboam, forgetting the divine promise, looked only to worldly means for securing his power, and * afraid lest his subjects, if they attended the temple-worship at Jerusalem, where the house of David reigned, should be tempted to submit again to their ancient sovereigns, set up idolatrous symbols of the divine presence in two places of his own dominions, and ordained priests who were not of the tribe of Levi, and celebrated religious festivals to counteract the attraction of the feasts at the temple. This conduct, however, though it proves a most criminal inattention to the injunctions of the Mosaic Law, yet it implies no deliberate disbelief of its divine original, or rejection of its authority, in either the monarch or the people: on the contrary, the conduct of Jeroboam bears (as has been already † noticed) the strongest attestation to the universal notoriety and established authority of that Law. Apprehensive as he was lest the observance of its ritual should alienate his subjects, and endanger his crown, he yet attempts not to dispute its authority, or discredit its rites; he merely introduces an innovation.

* 1 Kings xii. from 25 to the end.

† Supra, Vol. I. from p. 15 to 18.

tion as to the *place* where these rites were to be observed, and the *persons* by whom they were to be performed: he endeavours to captivate a people addicted to idolatrous emblems, by introducing the same symbols of the divine presence which the Jews had compelled Aaron to set up, and which he himself had been familiarized to in Egypt: he yet declares them the symbols of that Divinity who had delivered the nation from Egypt, and thus recognises the reality of that divine interposition on which the Mosaic Law was founded. "Behold," says he, "thy gods, O Israel, which "brought thee up out of the land of Egypt:" and still more, he appoints a feast similar to the feast of tabernacles at Jerusalem, which solemnly recognised the abode of the Jews in the wilderness, and all the miracles which attended it.

Such was the nature and extent of that schism and corruption introduced by Jeroboam, dictated by the policy of the monarch, and adapted to the idolatrous propensities of his subjects, but not at all indicating any disbelief of the Mosaic history, or the divine original of the Mosaic Law; on the contrary, evidently admitting both. But this, it will be said, was a strange inconsistency; true, but yet it is an inconsistency by no means incredible or unnatural. The history of Christianity, confirmed by our own experience, may teach us, that a departure from the pure sim-

plicity of a religion derived from an acknowledged revelation, may be introduced by policy, recommended by idolatrous corruptions to an unreflecting multitude, and subsist for ages; while, at the same time, nothing is farther from the ideas of that multitude, than any disbelief or rejection of the original revelation itself.

Nor ought it to be forgotten, that this schism and idolatry of the ten tribes gave occasion for the most signal displays of divine power, and the most emphatic denunciations and manifestations of divine justice, in the correction and government of this perverse race and their guilty monarchs. The miraculous reproof and punishment of * Jeroboam himself; the death of his † favourite son; the utter destruction of the three royal houses, of ‡ Jeroboam, of § Baasha, and of ‖ Ahab; all foretold by the prophets; afforded awful examples of the divine vengeance. There also were exhibited the miracles of ¶ Elijah and Elisha; and concerning the kings and people of the ten tribes, were pronounced some of the most distinguished prophecies of ⸸ Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah.

* Vide 1 Kings xiii. † Ibid. xiv.

‡ Compare 1 Kings xiv. 10, with xv. 29. § Ibid. xvi. 11.

‖ 1 Kings xxi. from 20 to 22; and 2 Kings ix & x.

¶ Vide 1 Kings, from xvii. to the end of the book; and 2 Kings ch. i. to vii. and ch. xiii.

⸸ Vide Isaiah i. viii. and ix. 18; xvii. and xxviii.; Hosea passim, particularly viii. ix. x. and xiii. 15, to the end.

Isaiah. And finally, after a series of instructions and chastisements, which illustrated the spirit of the divine Law, manifested the perpetual control of Divine Providence, and verified all the denunciations of their inspired Lawgiver; but which, though doubtless operative on many individuals, could not reform either the sovereigns or the great mass of the people; God executed judgment on this deluded and corrupted race, for "he removed Israel out of his sight, as he had "said by all his servants the prophets. So was "Israel carried away out of their own land to "Assyria; there was none left but the tribe of "Judah only*".

If, from the *effects* of this revolution on the *ten* tribes, we direct our reflections to its corresponding *effects* on the *remaining two*, we shall, I think, perceive, that it was the most powerful means of *preserving* in *them* whatever *degree of attention* to *the divine Law subsisted amongst them*; and preventing that universal idolatry and corruption in the entire Jewish nation, which would, to all appearance, have defeated the great purposes of the divine œconomy. This event rendered it the obvious political interest of the kings of Judah to adhere with strictness to the Mosaic Law, and promote its observance amongst their

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* Vide 2 Kings xvii. particularly from 18 to 23.

their subjects, to the utmost of their power. Thus to act, became the boasted distinction of these kings, and the popular topic by which they maintained their superiority over the kings of Israel. Thus, when Abijah the grandson of Solomon was preparing to engage with Jeroboam the first monarch of the ten tribes, this is the topic he selects to rouse the ardour of his own soldiers, and depress his adversary, whom he reproaches not only with his revolt, but his idolatry and impiety, in casting out the priests of the Lord the sons of Aaron, and with setting up the golden calves, which Jeroboam made for gods. * "But as for us, says he, the Lord is our God, "and we have not forsaken him; and the priests "which minister unto the Lord are the sons of "Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their busi-"ness: for we keep the charge of the Lord our "God; but ye have forsaken him. And behold, "God himself is with us for our captain, and "his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm "against you. O house of Israel, fight ye not "against the Lord, the God of your fathers; "for ye shall not prosper." The event justified the pious confidence of the young monarch, notwithstanding the superior generalship of Jeroboam, who had placed an ambush behind Judah; and notwithstanding the troops of Israel were 800,000,

* 2 Chronicles xiii. from 4 to the end.

800,000, those of Judah but 400,000 (the entire force of both nations being brought forward on this occasion, which rendered this providential dispensation more decisive) so that "when Judah "looked back, behold, the battle was before and "behind; yet when they cried unto the Lord, "it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam "and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. And "there fell of Israel 500,000 chosen men. Thus "the children of Judah prevailed, because they "relied on the Lord God of their fathers." This awful instance of divine vengeance must have operated as a powerful encouragement to the inhabitants of Judah to persevere in the pure worship of the true God, and to the reflecting part of Israel to reform.

In truth, this national separation formed, almost from the moment it began, a broad line of distinction between those who suffered themselves, from idolatrous propensities or worldly views, to be seduced from the observance of the divine Law, and those determined conscientiously to adhere to it. At its very commencement, not only the Levites, * "whom Jeroboam cast out of "the priests office, left their suburbs and their "possessions; and came to Judah and Jerusalem; "but after them, out of all the tribes of Israel, "such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God "of

* 2 Chronicles xi. from 13 to 17.

" of Israel, came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the " Lord God of their fathers. So they strengthened " the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam " the son of Solomon strong." It is true, this strict observance of the divine Law was not permanent even in Judah. Rehoboam, corrupted by prosperity, fell into the same crimes as his father Solomon; but when chastised by the invasion of the king of Egypt, and roused to reflection by the warning of a prophet, the " princes and the king humbled themselves; and " they said, The Lord is righteous:" on their repentance they were preserved from ruin*. The son and successor of Rehoboam gained the decisive victory above related over the revolted and idolatrous tribes; an event which appears to have made the deepest impression on the people of Judah; for immediately after, his son † Asa succeeding to that throne, displayed the most pious zeal in the service of Jehovah, removing his mother from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove, and entering into a solemn covenant with his whole assembled nation, ‡ " to " seek the Lord God of Israel with all their " heart, and with all their soul; and that who- " soever would not do so should be put to death. " And all Judah rejoiced at the oath; for they had " sworn

* 2 Chronicles xii. 5, 6, 7. † Ibid. xiv. xv. & xvi.

‡ Ibid. xv. particularly 9 to 15.

" sworn with all their heart, and sought him with " their whole desire, and he was found of them: " and the Lord gave them rest round about." And not only had all Judah and Benjamin joined in the covenant, but " the strangers with them " out of Ephraim and Manasseh and Simeon; " for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, " when they saw that the Lord his God was with " him."

Another instance, where the piety of Judah was exerted to recal the Israelites to their duty, occurred in the reign of Hezekiah, which has been already noticed*. But as it is not my intention to do more than give a general view of the providential government over the Jewish nation, in order to effect the purposes of the Mosaic œconomy, it is sufficient here to recollect what has before been noticed, how strongly the recognition of the Mosaic Law in these divided kingdoms establishes its authenticity; and to remark, that from the solemn covenant with God formed by Asa, the majority of the kings of Judah were pious and exemplary, particularly so long as they avoided any close connexion with the monarchs of Israel, the † affinity formed by Jehosaphat with the depraved family of Ahab appearing to be the first occasion, after this event, of introducing idolatry and vice into the royal house of Judah.

In

* 2 Chronicles xxx. ver. 1 to 5. Vide also supra, Vol. I. p. 19 to 22. † 2 Chron. xviii. 1. and xxi. 6.

In process of time, these corruptions extended, and, notwithstanding the various chastisements by which they were checked, required at length the severe discipline of seventy years captivity in Babylon, completely to subdue the idolatrous propensities of the Jews, and convince them of the guilt and danger of associating any other god with the supreme majesty of Jehovah; to whom ever since that period they have paid exclusive adoration, and have, notwithstanding a series of unexampled calamities and trials, observed the Mosaic Law, as of unquestioned authority and divine original.

Another opportunity will occur for tracing out the various steps by which Divine Providence under this and every other part of the Jewish dispensation advanced the interests of true religion, and prepared the way for the Gospel of Christ: enough, I trust, has now been said, to shew that the idolatries and transgressions of the Jewish nation, far from proving that their religion and government were not of divine original, or conducted by any providential control, evince the contrary; and evidently appear to have proceeded from causes perfectly consistent with the divine promulgation of the Mosaic Law, and whose influence must have produced a total and irremediable apostasy from true religion in the whole Jewish race, if it had not been perpetually counteracted

teracted by that Providence, which, without violating the analogy of nature, or infringing on the freedom and moral accountableness of man, yet directs the whole series of events so as to accomplish its own all-gracious purposes, out of evil bringing forth good, and perpetually advancing the cause of truth and righteousness.

I shall conclude this Lecture with some observations suggested by the subjects we have been now discussing. Let me then warn my readers against adopting a preconception, very injurious to the cause of religion with unthinking minds, even that all the individuals whom God made use of as instruments for the deliverance of his people, are brought forward to our notice in Scripture as worthy of divine favour, and fit models for our imitation in the *entire* tenour of their lives. They generally indeed possessed the important and praiseworthy qualities of zeal and intrepidity in defence of their national religion and constitution, and were active and effective instruments in restoring the worship of Jehovah; and thus in the main forwarding the interests of virtue and religion. Hence, God frequently assisted their efforts with miraculous aid, or is said to have raised them up*, or been with them as judges or kings of

* Most of the difficulties and objections which appear to discredit the divine original of the Jewish revelation, are derived from the misconduct of the nation in general, or from

of Israel. But we must by no means conceive that this implies that the divine approbation attended

from the errors and crimes of some distinguished individuals, who were employed as instruments to forward the progress of the divine œconomy. In addition to such circumstances as have been advanced in this and the preceding Lectures, to obviate such difficulties and objections, the following remarks may perhaps not be useless:

It is said to be utterly incredible, that persons raised up, aided, inspired, directed or assisted by God, should have been guilty of such crimes as David; such idolatries as Solomon; such weaknesses as Samson; such apostasies and cruelties as the Jews. To this it may be answered, that it is perfectly credible they should be raised up for *particular* purposes; aided in effecting a particular object; inspired with a certain degree of knowledge; assisted at particular periods, and in a special manner; and yet, that *beyond* this, their natural character, their external temptations, their acquired habits, may have produced all the irregularities and crimes which gave so much offence. To ask, why God did not *prevent* this? is to ask, why he did not exercise a *greater* degree of supernatural control than the peculiar purposes of Providence required? A question as absurd as it is presumptuous. On this subject, I transcribe the observations of Butler, Analogy, p. 260, which appear to me decisive. Having illustrated, by a variety of examples, that the system of nature is liable to objections, "*a priori*," analogous to those advanced against the scheme of revelation; and that as the former are admitted to be inconclusive objections to natural religion, the latter are equally so with regard to revelation; he proceeds, "By "applying these general observations to a particular objec- "tion, it will be more distinctly seen, how they are appli- "cable

attended *all* their conduct. The excesses of Samson, the rash vow of Jephthah, the ephod of Gideon, which

" cable to others of the like kind: and indeed to almost all " objections against Christianity, as distinguished from ob- " jections against its evidence. It appears from Scripture, " that, as it was not unusual in the apostolic age, for persons, " upon their conversion to Christianity, to be endued with " miraculous gifts; so, some of those persons exercised these " gifts in a strangely irregular and disorderly manner; and " this is made an objection against their being really mira- " culous. Now the foregoing observations quite remove this " objection, how considerable soever it may appear at first " sight. For, consider a person endued with any of these " gifts; for instance, that of tongues: it is to be supposed, " that he had the same power over this miraculous gift, as " he would have had over it, had it been the effect of habit, " of study and use, as it ordinarily is; or the same power " over it, as he had over any other natural endowment. " Consequently, he would use it in the same manner he did " any other; either regularly and upon proper occasions " only, or irregularly and improper ones: according to his " sense of decency, and his character of prudence. Where " then is the objection? Why, if this miraculous power was " indeed given to the world, to propagate Christianity and " attest the truth of it, we might, it seems, have expected, " that other sort of persons should have been chosen to be in- " vested with it; or that these should, at the same time, have " been endued with prudence; or that they should have been " continually restrained and directed in the exercise of it: " i. e. that God should have miraculously interposed, if at " all, in a different manner or higher degree. But from the " observations made above, it is undeniably evident, that

" *we*

which proved a snare unto him and all his house, involving them in the guilt of idolatry; the excessive

" *we are not judges*, in what degrees and manners, it were to " have been expected, he should miraculously interpose; " upon supposition of his doing it in some degree and " manner. Nor, in the natural course of Providence, are " superior gifts of memory, eloquence, knowledge, and other " talents of great influence, conferred only on persons of " prudence and decency, or such as are disposed to make the " properest use of them. Nor is the instruction and admo- " nition naturally afforded us for the conduct of life, parti- " cularly in our education, commonly given in a manner " the most suited to recommend it; but often with circum- " stances apt to prejudice us against such instruction."

Such are the observations of Butler; and they seem to shew most clearly, the unreasonableness of disbelieving the reality of the divine interpositions in the Jewish scheme, merely from the crimes and idolatries of the nation at large, or of the most remarkable persons employed in those interpositions. God raised up various judges, and kings and prophets, to deliver, to instruct, and to govern his people; and he gave them such aids of valour, prudence, knowledge, and such a degree of success, as were sufficient for the purposes they were necessarily to answer. But he did not make them, or the nation at large, *infallible* or *impeccable*: the judges often fell into errors and crimes; Samson abused his supernatural strength; David's piety and virtue was overpowered by criminal desire acquiring an undue ascendancy; Solomon, notwithstanding his extraordinary wisdom, was corrupted by sensuality, and fell into idolatry; and thus of the rest. But does this render it incredible that they were at all employed by God to effect his purposes,

sive indulgence of Eli to his profligate sons, the manner in which the sons of Samuel himself abused

poses, or on particular occasions assisted with extraordinary aid? Assuredly not. This would be to affirm that God could not interpose at all in human affairs, without interposing to such a degree, as would totally subvert the laws of man's moral nature, and the principles of his own moral government, by forcibly controlling human agency, and subverting all free will. The unreasonableness of supposing or expecting that the Deity should interpose to such a degree as this, is strongly and beautifully illustrated by archbishop King, in his celebrated Treatise on the Origin of Evil; and his observations are applied to the subject before us, by his learned and ingenious annotator, bishop Law. I shall insert a short extract from each; vide King's Origin of Evil, translated by Law, ch. v. sect. v. Subsect. III. p. 359. "Such an interruption as this," (viz. God's restraining all exercises of free will, when they tend to vice and absurdity; vide the two preceding paragraphs, particularly p. 356,) "would not only do violence to "nature, but quite invert the method of treating free "agents. This method is, to hinder or excite elections by "rewards or punishments, to divert them from unreason-"able or absurd things, and draw them to better by the "persuasion of reason. But it is doubtful whether the "nature of the thing will permit an election to be deter-"mined by *impulse*, or as it were by immediate contact, "for it seems equally absurd to attempt a change of elec-"tion by any other means than those above mentioned, as "to desire to stop the motion of matter by entreaty or offer-"ing rewards. May we not with the same reason expect "that matter should be moved by rewards and punish-"ments,

abused their pious parent's authority; the crimes even of David and Solomon; all these facts supply abundant

" ments, as the will influenced by physical impulse, as they " call it? for it is by these means they would have God to " stop or alter the choice. So preposterous an interposal " would confound every thing, and leave nothing certain " in nature. How fatal such an experiment would be, and " how it would affect the minds of the observers; or what " suspicions concerning God and their own security, it " might suggest to the whole system of thinking beings; " God only knows. We see that human laws cannot be " dispensed with, without very many inconveniencies, which " yet, as they are made upon an imperfect foresight, and can " provide for few cases, seem naturally to require some " interposition. How much greater evils may we appre- " hend from a dispensation with the divine, the natural " laws, on the observance of which the good of the whole " depends. This seems to be the reason why God makes " use of so much labour and pains, so great an apparatus " of means, so many precepts, persuasions, and even en- " treaties for the amendment of mankind, which neverthe- " less he could effect in a moment, if he were pleased to " apply force; and, he would undoubtedly do it, if he had " not foreseen more inconveniencies from a change in the " order of nature, and violence done to elections." On the preceding paragraph his Annotator very truly remarks, " The *history* of the *Jewish nation* affords good instances of " this: what an apparatus of outward means was continually " made use of in the government of that stiff-necked people! " What frequent murmurings, rebellions and apostasies were " permitted and then punished! What numerous miracles, " both of the remunerative and vindictive kind, were ap- " plied, in order to bring them to some tolerable sense of

" their

abundant proofs, that as in the people, so in the chiefs, there was a mixture of weakness and unsteadiness,

" their dependence on God, and suitable practice of the " duties resulting from it! All which would have been un- " necessary at least, if one miracle exerted on their minds " could have done the business; if their understandings " could as well have been illuminated, and their wills re- " formed at once; and if their practice produced by this " means, and as it were, *extorted* from *them*, would have " been equally agreeable to the Deity. And in this, as " well as many other respects, they seem to have been " types and representatives of all mankind."

Archbishop King's idea of the nature of God's moral government, in Subsect. V. of the same Chapter, seems to me so just, and to cast so much light on many facts and arguments considered in this Work, I cannot forbear transcribing it. " As it would be prejudicial to man, to all nature, for " God to hinder bad elections by his absolute power; so " nothing can be conceived so disagreeable to himself. We " have said, that God made the world, in order to have " something whereon to exercise his attributes externally. " But since he has several attributes, he cannot exercise " them *all* in *every thing* alike: his power, therefore, exerts " itself chiefly in one thing, his wisdom and goodness in " another. He exercised his power in creating the world " and putting it into motion; his goodness and wisdom in " the order and agreement of things. But the Divine Wis- " dom seems to have set apart the government of free " agents as its peculiar province; herein it fully exercises " itself, and acts up to its infinity: for if it were finite, it " would not be equal to so great a task. It does not seem " a very extraordinary thing for God to be able to govern " and absolutely direct such beings as are merely passive, " and

steadiness, an immaturity of intellect and dulness of sentiment as to morality and religion, which,

" and deprived of all motion of their own, whereby they " might make resistance; for those things obey easily which " do not move but when they are moved, neither is there " need of infinite wisdom to govern them; for infinite power " with a moderate use of wisdom would have been sufficient. " That there might be a subject, therefore, whereon the " infinite wisdom of God should display itself, he created " free agents; which being as it were put out of his power " and left to themselves, might act in a manner independent " of his will. It is evident to any person, how much more " difficult it is, and how much greater exercise of wisdom " it requires, to direct a multitude of these to a certain end, " and make them conspire to the common good; than to " order brute beasts, and such as have no power of them- " selves, in what manner you please. To them that consider " the vast multitude of free agents, which is almost infinite, " and their independence (since every one is, at least in " many cases, absolute master of his own actions, and is " permitted by God to act according to that liberty) God " seems to have given a specimen of the extent of his wis- " dom, which is able thus certainly and effectually to bring " to the end proposed so many free spirits, so many agents " that were in a manner set at liberty from his dominion, and " committed every one to his own government. Here is the " proper place for wisdom, wherein, setting aside and in a " manner suspending the exercise of his power, he attains " his ends by prudence only, by mere dexterity of acting; " and brings it to pass, that so many jarring wills, depending " on themselves alone, and no more inclined to either side by " the divine Power, than if there were no such thing, shall " yet conspire together to promote the good of the universe."

Colliber's

which, though controlled and overruled by Providence, so as to prevent them from defeating the great

Colliber's opinion, as quoted by Law, shall close this already too long note, for which the importance of the subject will, it is hoped, apologize. "It was highly suitable," (says this judicious writer) "to the Divine Wisdom, in the government "of the world, both to pre-ordain some of the principal "events, with relation to the entire human community, or "to the more considerable parts of it, and to reserve to him-"self a right of interposing, and influencing particular "agents; as in other cases, so more especially in order to "the accomplishment of these events. That he has actually "done so, is abundantly evident from Scripture prophecies "and histories; and that in so doing he has acted in a "manner most worthy his wisdom, is no less manifest. For "hereby it appears, that the divine government is equally "opposed to chance and destiny. Had the Deity taken no "care of futurity, but left every man to the conduct of his "own inclination, and natural effects in general to the in-"fluence of their causes, without *ever interposing* to *direct* "them to the attainment of his great design, this would "have been almost in effect to divest himself of the govern-"ment of rational agents, and to subject their affairs to "chance, and to the hazard of the utmost disorder and "confusion; or had he, on the contrary, absolutely or "fatally *determined every event*, though this would have "been far enough from divesting himself of the government "of the world, yet it would have been a government un-"worthy of the Deity; a government entirely exclusive of "all proper sin and punishment, virtue and reward; wherein "he himself would have been in effect the *only* agent, and "all the creatures stupid and *passive*; whereas, by pre-"ordaining

great objects of the divine dispensations, which these individuals were otherwise qualified to promote, yet should always prevent us from considering them as held forth by Scripture as in every instance of their conduct favoured of God and to be imitated by man. In general, indeed, this * is expressly noted in the Scripture itself, and an immediate punishment declared to be inflicted for their offences; where it is not, we are undoubtedly called on to compare their conduct with the PERFECT MODEL of our LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, and by this comparison judge how far they are worthy of our imitation; adopting

" ordaining the more material events, and suffering the " creatures freely to exert their faculties in all convenient " cases, he appears most wisely to have chosen the middle " way, and thereby to have equally avoided the mischiefs " of both extremes."

For more on this difficult subject, I refer to King's Work at large, to which, as far as appears to me, no adequate answer has been given. I would also entreat the inquiring reader to consider what has been advanced by Butler, in his Analogy, Part I. ch. iii. *Of the moral government of God;* ch. vi. *Of the opinion of necessity, as influencing practice;* and ch. vii. *Of the government of God, as being imperfectly comprehended;* as well as ch. v. *Of a state of moral discipline.* He would soon be convinced how *idly* ignorant and superficial sceptics *object* to what God *has* done; from their wild theories as to what, in their opinions, he *might, should* or *could* have done.

* This is remarkably conspicuous in the cases of Samson and Eli, David and Solomon.

adopting the sentiment of the Apostle, who declared, * "For such an High Priest became us, "who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from "sinners, and made higher than the heavens; "who needeth not daily, as those high priests, "to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and "then for the people: for this he did once, when "he offered up himself. For the Law maketh "men high priests which have infirmity; but "the word of the oath, which was since the "Law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for "evermore."

I shall here close these remarks, by entreating my younger readers, that in considering this as well as every succeeding part of the Jewish dispensation, they may recollect, that the effects arising from it were at no one period so *complete* and extensive, as to justify us in supposing the state of things at that period was that on which Providence rested as perfect and final. No, it was still a *system* in *progress*. To this hour the Jewish scheme is yet in *progress:* important as are the effects it has already produced, the singular situation of this people at this moment, outcasts as they appear to be from the kingdom of Christ, when compared with the prophetic declaration of their future conversion, after the "fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in †," must

* Heb. vii. 26—28. † Rom. xi. 25.

must convince us we cannot yet fathom the counsels of God, in the entire series of the divine œconomy. Yet we perceive its perpetual tendency, sometimes to produce in the whole mass of the Jewish nation an increasing sense of virtue and religion, by counteracting their prejudices and errors, and punishing their crimes and apostasies; sometimes leading a chosen few within the bosom of this nation, to far higher attainments in piety, and making them the instruments of impressing religious instruction, and religious sentiments, not so much on their immediate countrymen, as on remote nations in remote ages; thus at a great distance preparing the way for the Christian scheme.

Finally let it be recollected, that the design of the Jewish œconomy was not solely or chiefly to preserve the *Jews themselves* in perfect separation from the surrounding nations, and in perfect obedience to the divine Law; so that where this effect was not fully produced, it should be supposed to have *failed* in accomplishing its *purpose*: No, the GREAT OBJECT of this dispensation was, to preserve in the world a STANDING MONUMENT AND A STANDING PROOF OF THE UNITY, THE SUPREMACY, AND THE PROVIDENCE OF JEHOVAH: and this effect was *perpetually* and *uniformly* produced in all the periods and by all the events of the Jewish history. Whether the

Jews

Jews were obedient and prosperous, or idolatrous and depressed, in their apostasies and captivities, as well as their repentance and restorations; the power and providence of Jehovah were equally conspicuous; and, so far as concerned the great bulk of mankind, the interests of religion equally promoted and secured, and that providential dispensation successfully conducted, which was necessary to prepare for and introduce the GOSPEL of CHRIST.

PART III.

LECTURE III.

SECT. I.

LECTURE III.

SECT. I.—*Objections against the Mosaic Law, from its employing temporal sanctions—and visiting the iniquities of the fathers on the children*—WARBURTON'S *opinion on this subject—his Work incomplete—his reasoning not perfectly conclusive—How far I agree with, and how far I differ from, his opinion—Two conclusions seem true: first, that Moses employed temporal sanctions in his Law: second, the history of the Old Testament shews he believed a future state, and contains a gradual development of it—Moses employs temporal sanctions, both nationally and individually—This accounted for—from the nature of the Jewish theocracy—Reality of the extraordinary providence exercised over the Jews proved in this Work, without resorting to Warburton's medium—Temporal sanctions sufficient—necessary to confute idolatry—adapted to the intellectual and moral character of the Jews—best mode of introducing the doctrine of a future state with effect—a necessary part of the theocracy—exemplified to man the principles of God's moral government.*

PART III.

LECT. III.

SECT. I.

SANCTIONS OF THE JEWISH LAW.

DEUTERONOMY xxx. 15, 16.

" SEE, I have set before thee this day life and good, and
" death and evil; in that I command thee this day to
" love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep
" his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments,
" that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy
" God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to
" possess it."

IN reviewing the system of Religion and Policy established by the Jewish Lawgiver, two circumstances claim particular attention: *one*, that the rewards and punishments of a future life *were not* inculcated by Moses as *sanctions* of his Laws; and the *other*, that he *has* employed as a sanction, the declaration, that " God would visit the " iniquity of the fathers upon the children, to the " third and fourth generation of them that hate " him; and shew mercy unto the thousandth ge-

" neration

" neration of them who should love him, and keep " his commandments*."

Both these circumstances have been the subject of long and warm discussion. The former has been objected to as an omission of necessary truth, which no genuine revelation could overlook; and the latter has been represented as a violation of natural justice, which God cannot be supposed to perpetrate or authorize†. While, on the other side, the defenders of Revelation contend, that both these circumstances naturally arise from the peculiar character and views of the Jewish Law, and are closely connected with the reality of that extraordinary Providence by which the Jewish scheme was introduced and supported; and therefore, far from being inconsistent with the divine original of that system, they, on the contrary, illustrate and confirm it.

On this subject the celebrated Warburton has peculiarly distinguished himself: to do him justice, I shall state his argument in his own words. " In

* Exod. xx. 5 & 6.

† These objections have been brought forward by a number of infidel writers. Vide their arguments collected and answered by Warburton, Div. Leg. Vol. IV. In the Appendix to his Fifth Book, he refutes those of Bolingbroke. Vide also Leland's View of the Deistical Writers, Vol. II. Letters xxv. xxvii. xxx. & xxxiii. Vide also Leland's Answer to Morgan, ch. xi. Vide also Calmet's Dissertation sur la Nature de l'Ame. Tom. xxvi. p. 196.

" In reading the Law and History of the Jews, with " all the attention I could give to them, amongst " the many circumstances peculiar to that amazing " dispensation (from several of which, as I con- " ceive, the divinity of its original may be fairly " proved) these *two* particulars most forcibly struck " my observation; the *omission of the doctrine of* " *a future state*, and the *administration of an* " *extraordinary Providence*. As unaccountable " as the first circumstance appeared, when con- " sidered separately and alone, yet when set " against the other, and their mutual relations " examined and compared, the omission was not " only well explained, but was found to be an invin- " cible medium for the proof of the divine legation " of Moses: which, as unbelievers had been long " accustomed to decry from this very circumstance, " I chose it preferably to any other. The argument " appeared to me in a supreme degree strong and " simple, and not needing many words to enforce " it, or, when enforced, to make it well understood.

" Religion hath always been held necessary to " the support of civil society, because human Laws " alone are ineffectual to restrain men from evil, " with a force sufficient to carry on the affairs of " public regimen: and (under the *common* dispen- " sation of Providence) a future state of rewards " and

* Warburton's Divine Legation, B. VI. sect. vi. the Recapitulation, p. 362.

" and punishments is confessed to be as necessary
" to the support of religion, because nothing else
" can remove the objections to God's moral go-
" vernment under a providence so apparently
" unequal, whose phænomena are apt to disturb
" the serious professors of religion with doubts
" and suspicions concerning it, as it is of the
" essence of religious profession to believe, *that*
" *God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek*
" *him.*

" Moses, who instituted a religion and a republic,
" and incorporated them into one another, stands
" *single* amongst ancient and modern Lawgivers,
" in teaching a religion, without the sanction, or
" even so much as the mention of a future state
" of rewards and punishments. The same Moses,
" with a singularity as great, by uniting the reli-
" gion and civil community of the Jews into
" one incorporated body, made GOD, by natural
" consequence, their *supreme civil Magistrate,*
" whereby the form of government arising from
" thence became truly and essentially a THEO-
" CRACY. But as the administration of govern-
" ment necessarily follows its *form,* that before
" us could be no other than an *extraordinary*
" or *equal Providence.* And such indeed not only
" the Jewish Lawgiver himself, but all the suc-
" ceeding rulers and prophets of this republic,
" have invariably represented it to be. In the

mean

" mean time, no Lawgiver or founder of religion " amongst any other people ever promised so " singular a distinction; no historian ever dared " to record so remarkable a prerogative. This " being the true and acknowledged state of the " case; whenever the Unbeliever attempts to dis- " prove, and the advocate of religion to support, " the divinity of the Mosaic dispensation, the " obvious question (if each be willing to bring " it to a speedy decision) will be, Whether the " extraordinary Providence thus prophetically pro- " mised, and afterwards historically recorded to " be performed, was real, or pretended only. We " Believers hold that it was real: and I, as an " advocate for Revelation, undertake to prove it " was so; employing for this purpose as my " *medium*, the *omission* of a future state of rewards " and punishments. The argument stands thus:

" If religion be necessary to civil government, " and if religion cannot subsist, under the common " dispensation of Providence, without a future " state of rewards and punishments; so consum- " mate a Lawgiver would never have neglected " to inculcate the belief of such a state, had he " not been well assured that an extraordinary " Providence was indeed to be administered over " his people. Or were it possible he had been " so infatuated, the impotency of a religion want- " ing a future state, must very soon have con-

" cluded in the destruction of his republic: yet " nevertheless it flourished and continued sove- " reign for many ages.

" These two proofs of the proposition, that an " extraordinary Providence was really adminis- " tered, drawn from the *thing omitted*, and the " person omitting, may be reduced to the following " syllogisms:

" First; Whatsoever religion and society have no " future state for their support, must be supported " by an extraordinary Providence. The Jewish " religion and society had no future state for " their support: therefore the Jewish religion and " society were supported by an extraordinary " Providence.

" And again, Secondly; The ancient Lawgivers " universally believed, that a religion without a " future state could be supported only by an " extraordinary Providence. Moses, an ancient " Lawgiver, learned in all the wisdom of the " Egyptians, (the principal branch of which wis- " dom was inculcating the doctrine of a future " state,) instituted such a religion: therefore " Moses believed that his religion was supported " by an extraordinary Providence.

" This," (says the learned writer) " is the argu- " ment of the Divine Legation; plain, simple and " convincing, in the opinion of its author; a para- " dox in the representation of his adversaries."

This

This argument he afterwards sums up in the following words:—"The doctrine of a future "state is necessary to the well-being of civil "society, under the *ordinary* government of Pro- "vidence: all mankind have ever so conceived "of the matter. The Mosaic institution was "without this support, and yet it did not want it. "What follows, but that the Jewish affairs were "administered by an extraordinary Providence, "distributing reward and punishment with an "equal hand, and consequently that the mission "of Moses was divine *."

The learned writer, in another passage †, explains why he judged it necessary to prosecute his argument in the very *extended* manner in which he has pursued it; "including a severe "search into the religion, the politics and the "philosophy of ancient times; as well as a mi- "nute examination into the nature and genius of "the Hebrew constitution." It is indeed to be *lamented* that he was induced to take so *wide* a range, as, in his researches ‡ into heathen antiquity,

* Warburton, B. VI. sect. vi. vol. v. p. 404.

† Warburton, B. VI. sect. vi. the Recapitulation, particularly 366.

‡ I believe few impartial reasoners will be found to admit the full truth of this learned writer's opinions, as to the origin and use of the Pagan mysteries, in Book II. sect. iv. Compare

quity, and sometimes in his theological criticisms, he has been led into discussions altogether unnecessary

Compare Leland on the Advantage of Revelation, Vol. I. Part I. ch. viii. & ix. and Vol. II. Part III.; the entire of which appears to prove, that much of the Second Book of Warburton is over-stated. In truth, the supposition that "none of the ancient philosophers believed a future state, "nay, that they held such principles that they could not "possibly believe it, though they universally taught it," appears a ill-founded as it is paradoxical. The views of these ancient sages on this subject were indeed obscure, and their arguments neither clear nor certain; their opinions therefore were unsteady and fluctuating. But that they all steadily agreed in firmly disbelieving, and yet hypocritically affirming, the doctrine of a future state, nobody, I think, can believe, who will read with an unprejudiced mind *Plato's Phædon*, or the *first book of Cicero's Tusculan Questions*. I have always been impressed with the fullest conviction of the sincerity of these writers; while I could not but pity and lament the darkness and uncertainty which concealed from these great luminaries of the heathen world this most important truth. Consult, on this subject, Leland's Advantage of Revelation, Vol. II. part iii. Warburton's opinion as to the recent date of the book of Job, is, I believe, very generally questioned by the best critics; vide Peters on Job, and Dr. Magee's Dissertation on that subject, in his work On Atonement and Sacrifice, from p 321 to 347. And surely much of what Warburton has advanced, on the sixth book of the Æneid, the Rise of the Art of Medicine, the Interpretation of Dreams, &c. however ingenious and entertaining, can scarcely be considered as necessarily connected with the defence of Revelation. Vide Warburton, Book I. sect. iv.; Book I. sect. i. iii. & iv.; and Book IV. sect. iii. & iv.

unnecessary for the defence of Revelation; and in some of which, it can scarcely be denied, that his proofs are deficient, and his conclusions precipitate: and this is still more to be lamented, as the bulk into which these discussions swelled, and the controversies arising from them, occupied his attention so long, that they appear to have made him finally weary of his subject, and prevented him from giving that minute attention to the nature and genius of the Hebrew constitution, which he originally designed, as he *never completed* the *last volume* of his work, intended to support what had been already proved*, "in a "seventh book, which was intended to contain a "continued history of the religious opinions of the "Jews, from the time of the earlier prophets to the "time of the Maccabees; an eighth book, which "was destined to consider the personal character "of Moses, and the genius of his Law, as far as "it concerns or has a relation to the character of "the Lawgiver, and to supply a full and satisfac-"tory answer to those who may object, that a "revealed religion without a future state of re-"wards and punishments is unworthy the divine "Author to whom it is ascribed." And we have still further to lament, that only a *fragment exists of*

* Vide Warbuton, the two last pages of the Divine Legation.

of the ninth book, "intended to explain at large "the nature and genius of the Christian dispen- "sation, and to assign the great and principal "reason of the omission of future rewards and "punishments in the sanctions of the Jewish Law."

This able writer has thus left us to deplore the want of his learning and sagacity, in the illustration of those topics which it is necessary here to discuss: it becomes therefore the more incumbent on us to consider this important subject with the most patient attention, and conduct our reasonings concerning it with the most cautious sobriety.

That there is a close connexion between the extraordinary Providence by which the Jewish Law was supported, and the omission of future rewards and punishments in the sanctions by which the inspired Lawgiver enforced its observance, was, I believe, first perceived by this able writer; though, when stated, it appears not only undeniable, but obvious. It does not however appear to me, that the reasoning of this celebrated prelate establishes his conclusion as certainly and clearly as he himself supposes, or that the omission of a future state of retribution in the sanction of the Mosaic Law will *singly and independently prove,* that an *immediate* and *extraordinary* sanction must have subsisted. It appears to me, a concurrence of circumstances may be conceived, where such a conclusion would not follow from the

the omission of future sanctions; because the good effects generally resulting in the present life from virtue, particularly from the observance of our social duties, and the corresponding pernicious consequences of vice, may form a certain degree of present sanction to the moral precepts of religion, even without any certainty of an immediate extraordinary Providence; and that the punishments of civil law, and the protection of the civil magistrate, may supply an additional *present* sanction to the practical part of religion, and give some authority to its positive institutions. True it is, both these sanctions must necessarily be very inadequate, and the system of religion founded on them must be very imperfect; yet a state may be supposed to commence, and to continue at least for a considerable length of time, even with a system of religion thus imperfect, and a degree of sanction thus inadequate; and if we suppose a Legislator to find a nation indisposed to receive the belief of a future state, while he feels that he has no pretensions to the aid of an extraordinary Providence, it is not incredible, that he may endeavour to make the best he can of so disadvantageous a situation, and promulgate a system of religion and policy, relying only on abstract reason to prove the existence of some superior Power, who prefers virtue to vice, and sanctioning his Laws only by civil penalties. Conceiving this combination of circumstances possible, I do not concur

with the learned Warburton, when he maintains, that the omission of a future state in the religious system of a Legislator, is *singly* and *directly sufficient* to *prove* that system supported by an extraordinary Providence; but I do most fully coincide with him in thinking, that the particular circumstances of the Jewish Legislator, and the particular nature of the system he established, are such, that no such hypothesis can be at all applied to account for the omission of future sanctions in the Mosaic Law; and that nothing but the reality of an extraordinary Providence, clearly experienced both by the Legislator and the people, could have originally established and afterwards preserved that system, notwithstanding the omission of a future sanction. And I contend, that the *reality of an extraordinary providence* being *established* by *unquestioned testimony*, and by the general nature of the Mosaic code, we can thence *satisfactorily account* for the omission of a future sanction, and that this is the *only way* in which it can be accounted for; so that *such omission*, far from being inconsistent with the divine original of the Jewish dispensation, results from the operation of that extraordinary Providence which attends such divine original. In a word, Warburton considers the omission of a future sanction, as a *medium* from which, *independent of all other proofs*, an extraordinary Providence may be proved to have attended the Jewish dispensations; I consider it only

only as a *fact* for *which an extraordinary Providence* (the *reality* of which ought to be *proved from other sources*) will *satisfactorily account.*

I have thus endeavoured clearly and briefly to explain, how far I dissent from, and how far I adopt, the general argument of this celebrated prelate; and I am the more anxious to do this, because I do not recollect that any writer on this subject has viewed that argument with an impartial and unprejudiced mind. While its author lived, his splendid talents and extensive learning raised in his followers and defenders such enthusiastic admiration, they could not perceive, or at least would not allow, he had been in the minutest point erroneous; while the keenness of his controversial asperity, the loftiness of his literary pretensions, and the paradoxical form in which he too frequently chose to clothe his opinions, roused in his answerers a zeal of opposition, which would sometimes yield him no credit for the discovery of any truth. Time should now enable us to view him in his true light: in reasoning sagacious, yet precipitate; in criticism ingenious, but not unprejudiced; his comprehensive view sometimes embraced in the process of his inquiries too wide an extent; while his quick imagination sometimes led him to combine his arguments with too slight a connexion: but when he directed to any one grand point his undivided and unprejudiced attention, he frequently diffused over it the radiance of

of genius, and discovered the recesses of truth. Happy had his humility been equal to his talents, and had his temper been as calm and tolerant, as his understanding was luminous and penetrating: his researches would then have been conducted with more caution and impartiality, would have produced more unexceptionable conclusions, and been attended with happier success.

But to return to the immediate object of our present inquiry. It seems to me, on the fullest examination I could institute into the sacred records of the Old Testament, * first, that *Moses did not sanction his Laws by the promise of future rewards and punishments*; and secondly, that the history he records, shews not only that *he himself believed a future state* of retribution, (which Warburton admits) but *contains such proofs* of it, as must *naturally suggest it to every serious and reflecting mind*, though with less clearness than the succeeding works of the Old Testament, which exhibit this great truth with a perpetually increasing lustre, till by David, Solomon, and the prophets, it was so authoritatively revealed, as to become an article of popular belief and practical influence among the Jewish people, and thus prepare the way for the reception of the Gospel scheme.

I proceed

* The reader will easily perceive, that the first of these opinions I hold in common with Warburton; and that in the second, I directly oppose him.

I proceed to prove these facts, and endeavour to account for their existence, and point out their connexion with each other, and with the whole scheme of the Jewish revelation, in order to shew, that the entire system was worthy that divine original to which it is ascribed.

That the Jewish Lawgiver supports his Laws by the declaration, that an extraordinary Providence would punish their violation, and reward their observance in the present life, without any express declaration of a further sanction in a future state, seems clear and undeniable on the most attentive consideration of the Pentateuch*. Not only is the *whole nation* menaced with temporal punishments, but *individuals* are threatened and encouraged in the same manner. In the twenty-seventh chapter of Deuteronomy, we find the Legislator directing the solemn denunciation of the curses due to every violator of the Law, to be proclaimed in the great congregation of the twelve tribes, and assented to by all the people. In the twenty-eighth, the nature of the curses thus denounced, and of the opposite blessings, is fully and emphatically described, when we find *both to be entirely temporal*, though in the highest degree awful and impressive. And in the twenty-ninth we are distinctly told, that *if any individual transgressed,*

* Vide, for a full view of the proofs of this point, Warburton's Divine Legation, Book V. sect. iv. Vol. IV. 286.

gressed, he would be *subject to the same curses:* "Lest," says the Lawgiver*, "there should be "among you man or woman, or family, or tribe, "whose heart turneth away this day from the "Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these "nations; lest there be among you a root that "beareth gall and wormwood; and it come to "pass when he heareth the words of this curse, "that he bless himself in his heart, saying, "I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagi- "nation of mine heart, to add drunkenness to "thirst. The Lord will not spare him, but then "the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall "smoke against that man, and all the curses that "are written in this book shall lie upon him, and "the Lord shall blot out his name from under "heaven. And the Lord shall separate him unto "evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according "to all the curses of the covenant which are "written in this book of the Law." That these curses were of a temporal nature is undeniable; they were, with regard to the individual, to be of the same kind as those which were to be inflicted on the nation, which are immediately described; in the following clear and energetic language, to be such: † "That the generation to come of your "children that shall rise up after you, and the "stranger that shall come from a far land, shall "say,

* Deut. xxix. 18—21. † Ibid. ver. 22—25.

"say, when they see the plagues of that land, and "the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon "it; and that the whole land thereof is brimstone, "and salt, and burning, * that it is not sown, nor "beareth, nor any grass groweth thereon, like the "overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, "and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his "anger, and in his wrath: Even all nations shall "say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this "land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? "Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken "the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, "which he made with them when he brought "them out of the land of Egypt."

The employment of temporal sanctions with regard to *individuals*, is indeed abundantly proved, by the punishments denounced against offences which were of such a nature that they might easily escape *detection*, or could scarcely admit of being proved by legal evidence: the man who compounded an oil similar to that appropriated to the sacred uses of the tabernacle †; he who, while

* N. B. The present barrenness of the land of Judea is objected by Voltaire, and others, against the truth of the sacred history, which represents it as flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands: how absurdly, when this very *barrenness* is the full *accomplishment* of this and other prophetic denunciations! Vide the assertion, and its confutation by Warburton, Book V. sect. i. vol. iv. p. 146.

† Exod. xxx. 33.

while polluted with uncleanness, presumed to partake of the peace-offering of the Lord *; he who on the great day of atonement should do any work, or should not afflict his soul †; he who labouring under no uncleanness, should neglect to celebrate the Lord's passover ‡; and finally, the soul that doth aught presumptuously §; to each of these it was denounced, "That soul shall be cut off from among his people:" that is, shall suffer temporal death. The very *nature* of *some of these offences*, as ¶ Warburton has observed, proves nothing *beyond temporal death* could be the penalty; and we must understand the same expression in the same sense, in the last instance, in which if it stood singly some doubt might perhaps be entertained.

Admitting then that temporal sanctions alone were annexed to the Mosaic Law, how can this be accounted for? I answer, from the *very nature of that theocracy* which God established as the form of the Jewish government, and that extraordinary Providence which attended it. "This "extraordinary Providence," says Warburton, (very truly) "is represented as administered, first, "over the state in general; secondly, over pri- "vate men in particular: and such are presentation "we should expect to find, from the nature of "the

* Levit. vii. 21 & 25. † Ib. xxiii. 29. ‡ Numb. ix. 13.
§ Numb. xv. 30. ¶ Book VI. sect. iii vol. v. p. 149.

" the republic; because as an extraordinary Pro-
" vidence over the state necessarily followed
" God's being their tutelary Deity, so an extraor-
" dinary Providence as to particulars, follows
" as necessarily from his being their supreme
" magistrate*."

The reality of this extraordinary Providence it has been the object of the preceding Lectures to establish, without recurring to the medium of proof adopted by Warburton: it has at least been attempted to shew, that the † structure of the Mosaic history confirms in the strongest manner the reality of the miracles on which the certainty of that extraordinary Providence was founded. The ‡ connexion of the common events of the Jewish history with the miraculous, has been shewn to be so close, that the very foundation of the acknowledged history of this singular nation would be overturned, and the succession of common events would be unnatural and unaccountable, except the miracles on which they depend are admitted. The history of the § miracles themselves has been shewn to possess the four decisive marks of truth, which prove they could neither have

* Warburton's Divine Legation, Book V. sect. iv. Subsection II. vol. iv. p. 286.

† Vide Part I. Lect. IV. vol. i. p. 96, &c.

‡ Part I. Lect. V. vol. i. p. 124, &c.

§ Part I. Lect. VI. vol. i. p. 146, &c.

have been credited by the generation supposed to be cotemporary with them, nor at any subsequent era introduced into the system of the national records, and the national religion, if they had not been real and divine. The whole scheme of the Jewish ritual, and the singular constitution of the tribe of Levi, was shewn to be commemorative of these miracles, founded on their certainty, and designed to perpetuate the acknowledgment of their truth. *And still further, in examining into the political constitution and civil laws of the nation, we have perceived that both were founded on the acknowledged certainty of such an extraordinary Providence, on which depended the limitation of the legislative and executive authorities; the original distribution and subsequent tenure of property; the extraordinary regulations of the Sabbatic year, and the year of jubilee; the command for all the males to assemble at the capital three times a year; and a variety of regulations in the † penal laws of the state, otherwise unaccountable and inadmissible. In a word, it has been shewn, that the Jewish polity and the Jewish magistracy were merely mediums employed by the Divinity, to facilitate the regular administration of the extraordinary Providence by which the

* Part I. Lect. VI. vol. i. p. 162, &c.; also Part II. Lect. I. p. 217, &c.

† Supra, Vol. i. p. 257 to 261.

the Deity determined to govern this chosen race, with the * solemn assurance, that wherever that established constitution should be found inadequate for their government, either as to the whole state, or as to individuals, the Deity himself would interfere, and by an immediate and extraordinary distribution of rewards and punishments, exalt virtue and depress vice.

Such was the scheme of the Jewish dispensation. Can we discover why such a system was adopted? Undoubtedly, no mere human sagacity can penetrate into all the reasons of the divine œconomy; but some reasons, most important, Providence has permitted to appear.

Such a scheme was abundantly † sufficient to support the interests of religion and morality, because it was abundantly sufficient to convince man, "That God is, and that he is a rewarder of "those who diligently seek him ‡." Still further, it seems very evident this system was the *only* effectual mode of supporting true religion and sound morality, at *that period of society;* because it was the only one which afforded a fair opportunity of directly observing, and experimentally feeling, the existence, the power, the justice, and the

* Vide Part II. Lect. III. Vol. I. pp. 257, 258.

† Vide Warburton, Book V. sect. ii. Vol. iv. p. 153.

‡ Heb. xi. 6.

the providence, of the one great Jehovah; and *contrasting them* with the *nullity* and the *impotence* of those base *idols* which had usurped his place in the estimation of deluded man: and thus subverted the barriers of virtue, and opened wide the flood-gates of vice.

Let it be remembered, that the system of idolatry was founded on the belief both of *present* and *future* rewards and punishments, as dispensed by the false gods which it upheld; all the surrounding nations attributed their prosperity, as well national as individual, their success or failure in war and commerce; nay, the blessings of nature, the rains of heaven, and the fertility of the earth, to the influence of their false gods. Now the *superiority* of the *true God* could *never* be *established* by a *comparison of his power in the distribution of future and* * *invisible rewards and punishments;* it was only by proving decisively, that he, and he alone, was the dispenser of every blessing and every calamity in the *present* life, and that he distributed them with the most consummate justice, yet tempered with mercy; that he could completely expose, and for ever discredit, the pretensions of idolatry. This then seems one chief

* Vide the quotation from the atheist Vanini; Warburton, v. iv. p. 317. "Bonarum ac malarum actionum repromis-"siones pollicentur, in *futura* tamen vita, ne *fraus* detegi "possit."

chief reason, why *present, not future,* sanctions were employed in the Jewish dispensation; thus only could the cause of the great Jehovah be maintained in the midst of an idolatrous world.

Another reason appears to be derived from the *intellectual* and *moral character* of the *Jewish nation,* which was totally incapable of that pure and rational faith in the sanctions of a future state, without which these sanctions cannot effectually promote the interests of piety and virtue. Their desires and ideas confined to the enjoyments of the present world, they would pay little attention to the *promises* of a *future* retribution, which they could *never* be *sure were fulfilled;* nor could such motives be able to counteract the temptations of present pleasure or present interest, which vice so frequently holds out; or the allurements of voluptuous festivity and impure gratification, by which idolatry attached its votaries. In truth, the history of the Jewish nation, while under the immediate guidance of their Lawgiver, proves, that far from being familiarized with the just and philosophic notion of the Supreme Divinity, as possessed of power unbounded in its operation and extent, they were inconceivably slow in supposing or believing that he could produce any effect different from what they had already seen him produce, or exercise any power they had not already experienced. Thus the wonders they had seen in

Egypt, and the miraculous passage over the Red Sea, did not at all banish despondence, or inspire them with perfect confidence in divine aid. When, two months after, they found their *food* exhausted, and no natural supply at hand, immediately they exclaim *, "Ye have brought us forth into this "wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with "hunger." Although that terror was removed by a regular supply of food from heaven, yet this continued miracle did not prevent them from feeling an exactly similar terror, when, a short time after, they found themselves without *water* to drink: Again they exclaim †, "Wherefore is "this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, "to kill us and our children, and our cattle, with "thirst?" And afterwards, when they found the people whom God commanded them to invade, were great and powerful, and their cities strongly fortified, their past experience of the divine protection did not yet convince them that God was able in this new difficulty to secure them conquest and success; on the contrary, they were filled with total despair, and determined to rebel against their Lawgiver, and return into Egypt ‡. Now, with such a people, how little influence would the *remote* and *invisible*, and therefore to them *uncertain* or *incredible*, sanctions of a *future state* possess,

* Exod. xvi. 3. † Ibid. xvii. 3.
‡ Numbers xiv.

possess, how little would they avail, in opposition to the temptations of vice and the allurements of idolatry? Indeed the only mode of promulgating that important doctrine, of a future retribution, with effect, seems to have been that which the Jewish history assures us was adopted; even preparing the way for it, by a continued system of extraordinary Providence, fully proving to both Jews and Gentiles, that the Supreme Jehovah possessed the will and the power to punish vice and reward virtue with the strictest justice. This conviction once confirmed by long experience and unquestionable facts, they would be *prepared to believe* that the *same* immutable Divinity would display the *same justice* in a *future state*, when that extraordinary Providence should be withdrawn, which had been hitherto employed as best suited to the infancy of mankind, and the peculiar circumstances of the chosen race. But formally to annex the sanctions of a future life to a system of Laws, which declared that it was to be supported in every part by an extraordinary Providence, distributing immediate rewards and punishments, appears not only unnecessary, but inconsistent. It would have seemed, as if the Legislator who appealed to the *sanction* of an *extraordinary* Providence, was yet *secretly conscious* that his pretended expectations would not be verified by fact; and therefore *craftily* pro-

vided a *supplementary* sanction, to compensate for this deficiency, by denouncing *future* rewards and punishments; as to which, no human being could *certainly discover* whether his denunciation was really fulfilled or not.

Thus the nature of the Jewish theocracy, and the character of the Jewish people, compared with the purposes that theocracy was intended to effect, and the temptations against which that people was to be guarded, seem sufficiently to account for the sanction of an immediate and extraordinary Providence being employed to support the Mosaic Law, rather than the rewards and punishments of a future state. To support such a theocracy, an extraordinary Providence was indispensably necessary; the Deity would be degraded, if supposed to command as an immediate sovereign, without enforcing immediate submission.

Add to this, that all national obedience and national transgression could, *as such*, be recompensed only by *national* prosperity or national punishment; these therefore God their Sovereign undertook to dispense with exact justice: a wonderful and awful sanction, altogether wanting in every other state.

Inferior magistrates were empowered to inflict punishments for such offences against morals, and such violations of the religious constitution, as they could take cognizance of; in the same manner as similar

similar magistrates in other states. But here, and here only, the *Supreme Sovereign*, even GOD himself, undertook to supply every defect in all inferior administrations, and reward every man according to his works, as immediately and conspicuously as any civil magistrate could possibly do; employing therefore for this purpose immediate and temporal sanctions. In a word, in this polity, offences against the state and against individuals, were also offences against religion; because the entire Jewish Law was in every part equally the Law of God. As, therefore, offences against the state, and against individuals, in this as in every other community, must be restrained by immediate punishments, not merely by the terrors of a future state; so, in order to preserve consistency, and prove that God was really equally the author of the entire system, he undertook to support every part alike, by an exact distribution of temporal sanctions. The sanctions of a future life were therefore in such a system, not only unnecessary, but were foreign from its design, and therefore omitted by its inspired author. But surely the promulgation of a system of Laws thus circumstanced, could not originate from any source but a divine authority; as it manifestly could not be maintained for any length of time by any but a divine power, controlling when necessary the

course of nature, and the conduct of man, to accomplish its purposes and execute its will.

The confirmation which the evidence of Revelation derives from the extraordinary Providence exercised over the Jews, is not the *only* good effect resulting from it. In this dispensation, mankind are enabled to discern the principles and the process of that moral government which God exercises over nations, even in the course of his ordinary providence; which undoubtedly dispenses public prosperity and public calamity, and regulates the rise and decay of empires, on the very same principles which are so strikingly displayed in the history of the chosen people. The divine interposition in the general government of the world is indeed conducted by the regular operation of secondary causes, and therefore more silent and unseen than the course of that extraordinary Providence then exhibited; but it is not therefore less certain, or less effective. In this part of sacred history the judgments of God are distinctly and solemnly exhibited for the instruction of man. Here we are convinced by experimental and decisive proofs, that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of "men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will *;" "that wisdom and might are his †;" "that the "race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the "strong;"

* Dan. iv. 17. † Ibid. ii. 20.

"strong*;" for "it is the Lord of Hosts who "governs the hearts of kings, and subdueth the "strength of the mighty†;" "He hath purposed, "who shall disannul it? his hand is stretched "out, and who shall turn it back‡?" "Who hath "hardened himself against him, and prospered§?" In a word, in the history of the Jewish state this great truth is clearly and powerfully impressed, That as "righteousness exalteth a nation," so "sin is the reproach of any people¶:" a lesson which, but for the immediate and extraordinary Providence displayed in this awful dispensation, could never have been so forcibly inculcated, or so clearly understood.

* Eccles. ix. 11. † Job xii.

‡ Isaiah xiv. 27. § Ib. ix. 4.

¶ Proverbs xiv. 34.

PART III.

LECTURE III.

SECT. II.—*Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children—In what sense to be understood—Not unjust—Necessary in a theocracy, as far as relates to temporal and national punishments—Chiefly denounced against idolatry—In this case not only just but merciful—Human tribunals not permitted by the Mosaic Law to act upon this principle—Why—Analogous to God's general providence—A dispensation of mercy rather than severity—Limited in its extent and application.*

PART III.

LECT. III.

SECT. II.

SANCTIONS OF THE JEWISH LAW.

EXODUS xx. 5, 6.

Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, to "the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; "and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love "me, and keep my commandments."

THE consistency and necessity of *temporal* sanctions in the Jewish Law, we have endeavoured to establish, in the last Section: if with success, we derive from this a clear and easy answer to the objection which at first appears to arise from the denunciation, "That God would "*visit* the *sins of* the *fathers upon the children*, to "the third and fourth generation of them that "hate him; and shew mercy unto thousands in "them who should love him, and keep his commandments." The only circumstance that makes

this denunciation appear *severe* or *unjust*, and this promise *unreasonable*, is the supposition, that the sanctions of a *future* state are understood; which it would certainly be repugnant to the divine justice to suppose should be distributed according to such a rule as this. But this objection altogether vanishes, the moment we are convinced that the reward and punishment here meant, relate only to outward circumstances of prosperity and distress in the present life; because, if such a sanction was necessary in the particular system of providential administration by which God thought fit to govern the Jewish race, it is evident any inequality as to individuals would be certainly and easily remedied in a future life*; so that each should

* We cannot but believe this to be the case, in many instances of divine judgment recorded in the sacred history; as in the children of Achan involved in the punishment of his violation of the divine anathema, Joshua vii. 24. (though it is possible they may have seen his conduct, and by concealing it, been partakers of his guilt;) and in the punishment denounced in consequence of the idolatries of Jeroboam, Baasha, and Ahab, involving their entire posterity. At least in the instance of Abijah, the son of Jeroboam, this recompense seems to be more than obscurely hinted at. On his falling sick, Jeroboam's queen disguises herself, and repairs to Abijah the prophet; who, though blind with age, is enabled by God immediately to discover her, and to announce to her, that God would destroy the whole house of Jeroboam; and in particular, that the moment she entered into

should receive his final reward exactly according to his true merit in the sight of God, and "thus the Judge of all the earth do right."

Now it seems undeniable, that *such* a sanction was a *necessary* part of the Jewish polity, so far as this required a providential distribution of *national* rewards and punishments. *These* affecting the great mass of the people, and extending through such portions of time as were necessary to give them their full efficacy in forming the national character, could not be confined within the limits of a single generation; or exclude from their operation each private family in succession, as the heads of that family might drop off, whose conduct had originally contributed to swell the mass of national guilt, or contribute to the progress of national improvement.

Thus, when it became necessary to chastise the Jewish

into the city to her own door, her son should die; and it is added, 1 Kings xiv. 13, "And all Israel shall mourn for "him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come "to the grave," (i. e. obtain regular burial) "because in "him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God "of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam." On this fact can we believe the reflecting Jews even then understood that the only recompense to this child's goodness was his dying of a disease rather than by the sword, and being regularly buried and mourned for, though he died prematurely, while his idolatrous father was permitted to reign twenty-two years? I acknowledge this narrative appears to me to supply an *intelligible hint of a future state.* Vide the next Lecture.

Jewish idolatry by a captivity of such a length as might permanently reform it, which was the result of the captivity in Babylon, a period of seventy years was found scarcely adequate to this effect. Thus the sins of the parents were necessarily visited on the children to the third generation, so far as related to national suffering. Yet surely we cannot derive any impeachment against divine justice or mercy, from a dispensation which placed the children of the guilty in a situation so *favourable* for their *moral* and *religious* improvement, by checking the crimes of their parents; while those individuals, who, though exempt from the national guilt, might yet be swept away in the overwhelming torrent of national calamity, would meet abundant compensation for their unmerited sufferings, by the favour of their God in another and a better world.

Considered, therefore, as forming part of a scheme of *national* reward and punishment, the sanction thus promulgated was equally just and necessary; and to promulgate it thus clearly, could not but materially contribute to check the inconsiderateness of transgression, and confirm the steadiness of virtue. But the Mosaic Law certainly employed the same sanction to influence the conduct of each individual. Nor is this objectionable, if that sanction was a necessary part of the providential system of discipline exercised over

over the nation at large. Each individual by his separate transgression contributed to the accumulated weight of national guilt; and it was just, that each should be taught to regard the share of national calamity, which he and his posterity must sustain, as a *personal* chastisement from the hand of God.

But the operation of this sanction was not confined to the participation of national rewards or punishments; it certainly affected individuals who violated the commands to which it was annexed, even though such violation was confined to themselves, and could not therefore draw down any national chastisement; but let it be recollected, that the great crime, the temporal punishment of which was to extend to the third and fourth generation, was *idolatry* *; that source of all

* On this subject, Maimonides, More Nevochim, Pars I. cap. liv. p. 90, makes the following observations, which seem just and important: "As to that character of God, "of visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, "know, this relates only to the crime of idolatry; as may "be proved from the Decalogue, which says, on the third "and fourth generation of them which *hate me*; for nobody "is said to *hate* God but an idolater: as the Law expresses, "(Deut. xii. 31) 'Every abomination of the Lord which "he hateth have they done unto their gods:' and mention is made of the fourth generation, because *no* man can "hope to *see more* of his progeny than *four* generations. "When, therefore, the idolaters of any city are to be put

"to,

all profaneness and pollution, which, under the Jewish polity, was not only a violation of that religious duty for which the children of Israel were set apart from every nation under heaven, but was besides the *highest crime* against *the state*, which acknowledged Jehovah as supreme Sovereign, the sole object of civil allegiance, as well as of religious worship; on whose immediate protection the whole nation depended; from whom was derived the authority of every part of the government, the tenure of all property, and the enjoyment of every civil right. To introduce idolatry, was therefore to subvert the foundation of the social union, to violate the most solemn and sacred duties of allegiance, and engage in the foulest treason, and the most audacious rebellion. The supreme Sovereign therefore denounced against such treason and such rebellion, not only *condign*

"to death, then not only the parent idolater shall be de-
"stroyed, but his son, and his grandson, and his great
"grandson; as if it said, By this denunciation it is signified,
"that the seed and posterity of idolaters were to be cut off,
"however young, on account of the crimes of their parents
"and ancestors. And this precept we find universally ob-
"served in the Law; whence, against a city which had
"apostatized to idolatry, the Law commands that it should
"be destroyed, and every thing therein; and this for the
"sake of guarding against and preventing that pollution
"and guilt, which might otherwise arise from it."

condign punishment on the offender himself, but the *extension* of this *punishment* to his family and *immediate descendants*; a principle recognised by so many of the most civilized states, in which the *crime of treason* is punished not only by death, but the *confiscation* of property, and the *taint* of blood: a principle which, when carried into execution by a human tribunal, may operate in particular instances with unmerited or excessive severity, but which in the Jewish state was applied in every instance by unerring justice. "For the Deity, (as Warburton well observes*) though he allowed capital "punishment to be inflicted for the crime of *lese* "*majesty*, on the person of the *offender*, by the "delegated administration of the Law; yet concerning his family or posterity, he *reserved the* "*inquisition of the crime to himself*, and expressly "*forbad* the magistrate to meddle with it, in the "common course of justice. The fathers shall "not be put to death for the children, neither "shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his "own sin†." "Now God's appropriating to "himself

* Divine Legation, Book V. sect. v. Vol. iv. p. 332.

† Deut. xxiv. 16. See this Law acted upon, 2 Kings xiv. 5 & 6.; where we are told, that Amaziah king of Judah, "as soon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, slew "his servants which had slain the king his father. But the "children of the murderers he slew not; according unto "that

" himself the execution of this Law would abun-
" dantly *justify* the *equity* of it, even supposing it
" had been given by him as part of an *universal*
" religion; for why was the magistrate forbidden
" to imitate God's method of punishing, but be-
" cause no power less than omniscient could, in
" all cases, keep clear of injustice in such an in-
" quisition?"

Nor was this sanction chargeable with *cruelty*, more truly than with injustice. It is indeed evident, that to extend the temporal punishment denounced against idolatry by the Jewish Law, to the family of the idolater, might be the *tenderest mercy*, as the most probable method of checking the contagion of that infectious crime, amongst a people who were habituated to consider temporal punishment as the sure criterion of divine displeasure; and whom its *infliction* was therefore the only effectual mode of awakening to serious reflection and humble penitence.

Thus the principle of visiting the sins of the fathers on the children, unto the third and fourth generation, by extending the temporal judgments denounced

" that which is written in the book of the Law of Moses,
" wherein the Lord commanded, saying, 'The fathers shall
" not be put to death for the children, nor the children be
" put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put
" to death for his own sin."

denounced against the perpetration of idolatry to the immediate posterity of the idolater, is perfectly consistent with the divine justice; because it interferes not with that final retribution at which every man shall be rewarded according to his works. It was in truth a dispensation of mercy, calculated to restrain the crimes of the parents by one of the most powerful motives which can influence the human heart, the terror of involving their innocent progeny in temporal calamity and ruin; while, with respect to the children, it tended to guard them against the otherwise almost resistless contagion of parental example, and place them in the most advantageous circumstances for recovering their virtue and their piety. It was an essential part of that system of extraordinary providential government, which Jehovah judged it necessary to exercise over the Jewish nation; since *national* rewards and punishments necessarily extended *beyond* the limits of a *single* generation, in order to produce any permanent and general effect. And finally, it was strictly analogous to the general system of the divine government over the whole human race; since in what is termed the common course of events, we perpetually find families and nations for a long series of years involved in the mischiefs arising from their parents follies and crimes, or enjoying the blessings derived from their wisdom, virtue,

virtue, and fortitude. The Jewish scheme proceeded on exactly the same principles; with this only difference, that the Supreme Jehovah, the immediate Sovereign as well as the tutelary God of the Hebrew nation, undertook to dispense this, as well as every other species of reward and punishment, by an immediate and * extraordinary Providence, in which justice should be tempered with *abundant mercy*, confining the providential and temporary *punishment* for the parents crimes to the *third* and *fourth* generation; while it encouraged adherence to virtue and to God, by the assurance of a *reward*, similar indeed in kind, but infinitely superior in degree, and which under the common course of events could not be hoped for; promising to extend the blessings obtained by

* Warburton's observation on this subject, Book V. sect. v. Vol. iv. p. 335, seems just and conclusive: "God," says he, "supported the Israelites in Judea, by an extraordinary administration of his Providence; the consequences of which were, *great temporal blessings*, to which they had no *natural claim*, given them on condition of obedience. Nothing, therefore, could be more equitable than, on the violation of that condition, to withdraw those extraordinary blessings from the children of a father thus offending. How then can the Deist charge this Law with injustice? since a posterity, when *innocent*, was affected only in their *civil conditional* rights, and when deprived of those which were natural and unconditional, were always guilty."

by parental obedience and piety, even to the *thousandth* generation of those who love God.

Thus we perceive, how perfectly all the parts of this awful and wonderful dispensation harmonized together; and with what strict truth, as well as majestic sublimity, the Hebrew Lawgiver describes Jehovah proclaiming his name: * "The "Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, "long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and "truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving "iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that "will by no means clear the guilty;" (and in perfect consistence with these attributes) "visit-"ing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, "and upon the childrens children."

That this sanction of the Jewish Law was not to be understood as a *general* principle of the divine œconomy, under *every* form of civil society, and *every degree* of religious improvement; but merely as a necessary part of that administration of an extraordinary Providence by which the Jewish Law was sanctioned and upheld during the earlier periods of its existence; has been proved by Warburton from a circumstance which infidel writers have laid much stress upon as an instance of contradiction between different parts of Scripture; when in truth it was only a gradual change in the divine system, wisely and mercifully adapted to

* Exod. xxxiv. 6 & 7.

to the gradual improvement of the human mind. Towards the conclusion of this extraordinary œconomy, (observes Warburton) when God by the later prophets reveals his purpose of giving them a NEW DISPENSATION, in which a future state of rewards and punishments was to be brought to light (or rather, according to my system, *substituted* in place of an immediate extraordinary Providence as the sanction of religion;) it is then declared in the most express manner, that he will *abrogate* the Law of punishing children for the crimes of their parents. Jeremiah*, speaking of this new dispensation, "In those "days they shall say no more, The fathers have "eaten a sour grape, and the childrens teeth are "set on edge. But every one shall die for his "own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour "grape, his teeth shall be set on edge. Behold, "the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make "a new covenant with the house of Israel, and "with the house of Judah: not according to the "covenant that I made with their fathers, in the "day that I took them by the hand to bring them "out of the land of Egypt (which my covenant "they brake, although I was an husband unto "them, saith the Lord:) But this shall be the "covenant

* Jeremiah xxxi. 29—33. Compare Ezekiel, ch. xviii. the entire chapter.

"covenant that I will make with the house of "Israel in those days; I will put my Law in "their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; "and will be their God, and they shall be my "people." And Ezekiel, speaking of the same times, says *, "I will give them one heart, and "will put a new spirit within you; and I will "take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will "give them an heart of flesh: that they may "walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances: "and they shall be my people, and I will be their "God. But as for them, whose heart walketh "after the heart of their detestable things, and "their abominations, I will recompense their "way upon their own heads, saith the Lord "God."

Thus in the Jewish system, a people of gross and carnal minds and short-sighted views, slow to believe any thing they could not themselves experience, and therefore almost incapable of being sufficiently influenced by the remote prospect of a future life, and the pure and spiritual blessedness of a celestial existence, were wisely and necessarily placed under a Law, which was supported by a visible extraordinary Providence, conferring immediate rewards and punishments on the person of the offender; or laying hold of his most powerful instincts, by denouncing, that his

* Ezek. xi. 19—21.

his crimes would be visited upon his children and his childrens children to the third and fourth generation: a proceeding which made a necessary part of that national discipline under which the Jews were placed, and which was free from all shadow of injustice; because, when the innocent were afflicted for their parents crimes (as Warburton has well observed) it was by the deprivation of temporal benefits, in their nature forfeitable. Or should this not so clearly appear, yet we may be sure, God, who reserved to himself the right of visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, would perfectly rectify any apparent inequality in the course of his providential government over the chosen people, in another and a better world; by repaying the innocent, who had necessarily suffered here, with an eternal and abundant recompense.

PART III.

LECTURE IV.

KNOWLEDGE OF A FUTURE LIFE AMONG THE JEWS.

LECTURE IV.

SECT. I.—*Doctrine of a future state, though it does not form the sanction of the Mosaic Law, is yet contained in the Writings of Moses—Warburton's assertions on this subject hasty and inconsistent with each other—and with the Seventh Article of the Church of England—Future state intimated in the history of the creation and the fall—by the circumstances attending the death of Abel—by the translation of Enoch—by the command to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac—Future state must have been known to the Patriarchs, and influenced their conduct—attested in the Epistle to the Hebrews—instanced in the history of Jacob—of Moses—by our Lord's reply to the doubts of the Sadducees—the declaration of Balaam —Future state an object of popular belief among the Jews—from the laws relating to necromancers, &c.*

PART III.

LECT. IV.

SECT. I.

A FUTURE STATE KNOWN TO THE JEWS.

HEBREWS xi. 13.

" These all died in faith, not having received the promises,
" but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of
" them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were
" strangers and pilgrims upon earth."

IN a former Lecture *, I have endeavoured to establish the *first* position I had laid down respecting the connexion that subsisted between the Mosaic Law and the belief of a future state of retribution; even *that Moses did not sanction his Laws by the promise of future rewards and punishments;* and to assign such reasons for this part of the divine economy, as the nature of the subject suggested. I now proceed to discuss the second conclusion, which an attentive perusal of the Old Testament appears to me to establish on this subject; even that *the history recorded by the Jewish*

* Part III. Lect. III. sect. i. supra. p. 155, &c.

Jewish Lawgiver shews, that he himself believed a future state of retribution; and that it contains such proofs of it, as must naturally suggest it to every serious and reflecting mind, though with less clearness than the succeeding scriptures of the Old Testament, which exhibit this great truth with a perpetually increasing lustre, until by the Prophets it was so authoritatively revealed, as to become an article of popular belief and practical influence amongst the Jewish people, and thus *prepare the way* for the reception of the Gospel.

This position is abundantly confirmed by the Apostle to the Hebrews, in his eleventh chapter. It appears, however, very *different* from the opinion of the celebrated Warburton, with whose sentiments on the former part of this subject, I so nearly agreed. The subject of his *fifth book* * is to prove, *That the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments is not to be found in, and did not make part of, the Mosaic dispensation.* One part of this proposition, that a future retribution was *not employed* as a *sanction* of the Mosaic Law, and in this sense made no part of the Jewish dispensation, *I admit,* and have endeavoured to account for, in agreement with the principles of this celebrated Prelate. The other part, that *the doctrine of a future state is not*

* Vide Book V. sect. i. Vol. iv p. 133.

not to be found in any part of the Mosaic records, I am compelled to *dissent* from. This opinion is, however, strongly expressed by this learned writer. He asserts, "*In no one place* of "the Mosaic institutes, is there the least mention, "or any intelligible hint, of the rewards and "punishments of another life*:" and afterwards, "I shall shew, from a circumstance the clearest "and most incontestable, that the Israelites, from "the time of *Moses* to the time of *their captivity*, "*had not* the *doctrine* of a future state of rewards "and punishments†." *This circumstance*, if really existing, would certainly be decisive to establish the conclusion it is brought to support. It is in brief, that throughout the entire Old Testament, various as the Sacred Writings are, in their subject, style and composition, and various as the occasions on which they were composed, and the characters of their authors; yet, says this eminent writer, "in none of these different circum-"stances of life, in none of these various casts of "composition, do we ever find them acting on "the motives or influenced by the prospect of "future rewards and punishments, or indeed ex-"pressing the least hope or fear or common curi-"osity concerning them; but every thing they do "or say respects the present life only, the good "and

* Divine Legation, Book V. sect. v. Vol. iv. p. 318.

† Ibid. p. 344.

" and ill of which are the sole objects of all their " pursuits and aversions *." And again, " I " infer, as amidst all this variety of writing the " doctrine of a future state never once appears " to have had any share in this people's thoughts, " it never did indeed make any *part of their* " *religious opinions.*" And again, " Their sub- " terfuge is quite cut off, who pretend, that Moses " did not indeed propagate the doctrine of a fu- " ture state of rewards and punishments, in writ- " ing, but that he delivered it to tradition. For " we see he was so far from teaching it, that he " studiously contrived to keep it out of sight, " nay, provided for the want of it; and that the " people were so far from being *influenced by it*, " that they *had not even the idea of it* †."

The authority of this learned writer would have raised considerable doubts in my mind, but that his *own* subsequent *concessions* on the very same points appear so different from the opinions I have now stated, as either entirely to overturn them, or at least limit them in such a manner as is perfectly consistent with the *second position* I have laid down. For, in the Sixth Book, sect. v. he thus explains his opinion: " But though it " appears that a future state of rewards and " punishments made no part of the Mosaic dis- " pensation,

* Warburton, Vol. iv. p. 344.

† Ibid. Book V. sect. v. Vol. iv. p. 359.

" pensation, yet the Law had certainly a spiritual " meaning, to be understood when the fulness of " time should come: And hence it received the " nature, and afforded the efficacy, of prophecy. " In the interim, the mystery of the Gospel" (including, by this learned writer's *own definition*, the doctrine of a future retribution) " *was occa-* " *sionally revealed by God* to his *chosen servants*, " *the fathers and leaders of the Jewish nation*; " *and the dawning of it was gradually opened* " *by the Prophets, to the people.* And which is " exactly agreeable to what our excellent Church, " in its Seventh Article of Religion, teacheth con- " cerning this matter:

" ARTICLE VII.—*The Old Testament is not* " *contrary to the New; for both in the Old and* " *New Testament, everlasting life is offered to* " *mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator* " *between God and man. Wherefore they are not* " *to be heard, which feign that the old fathers* " *did look only for transitory promises**."

It seems difficult to *reconcile* this tenet of the Church with this learned writer's opinion, " that " through the *whole* Old Testament we never " find any of the authors of the various compo- " sitions it contains, acting on the motives or in- " fluenced

* Warburton, Book VI. sect. v. at the beginning, Vol. V. p. 194.

" fluenced by the prospect of future rewards and " punishments."

In truth, the mischief of rashly adopting a system, and forcing Scripture to bend to that system, is most conspicuous in this celebrated writer, on this subject. When he first states the idea, and adopts it as the basis of his reasoning, he advances in the most unqualified manner, " that throughout the whole Old Testament, " *from Moses to the Captivity,* the Israelites *had* " *not* the *doctrine* of a future state of rewards and " punishments; and that so much as an *intelli-* " *gible hint* of it is not found in the Mosaic " Law." In the passage immediately before us he admits, " that it was *occasionally revealed* by " God to his chosen servants, the fathers and " leaders of the Jewish nation; and that it was " gradually opened by the Prophets to the peo- " ple." And in another passage he limits his assertion thus: " As my position is, that a future " state of rewards and punishments was not " taught in the Mosaic dispensation; all texts " brought to prove the knowledge of it, *after the* " *time of David,* are as impertinent as the rest " (for what was known from his time, could not " supply the want of what was unknown for so " many ages before): this therefore puts all the " prophetic writings out of the question *." The direct

* Book VI. sect. i. Vol. v. p. 9.

direct opposition between the assertion, that it was unknown *until the Captivity*, and yet gradually opened by the Prophets *after the time of David*, is obviously the consequence of that excessive rapidity of reasoning, and obstinate adherence to a preconceived system, which are too plainly discernible in this celebrated writer. But the opinion I have above stated will, I trust, be found to combine the various truths which his system has exhibited, while it avoids the inconsistencies in which it is involved. I shall therefore endeavour to establish it by direct evidence, somewhat at large; as it is a point of considerable importance in contemplating the progress of the divine economy, and the connexion between the Jewish and the Christian schemes.

In the Mosaic account of the creation, the manner in which the formation of man is recorded seems important in the view of this subject. God is represented as entering on this part of his work as it were with peculiar deliberation and solemnity: "And God said, Let us make "man in our image, after our likeness: and let "them have dominion over the fish of the sea, "and over the fowl of the air, and over the "cattle, and over all the earth, and over every "creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

"So

" So God created man in his own image, in the " image of God created he him: male and female " created he them *." The account is afterwards resumed. Of man alone, amidst all the tribes of animated nature, it is said, " And the Lord God " formed man of the dust of the ground, and " breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and " man became a living soul †."

The history having thus described the formation of this favoured creature, proceeds to relate the manner in which the divine goodness provided for his accommodation and support. " And the " Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; " and there he put the man whom he had formed. " And out of the ground made the Lord God to " grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, " and good for food; the tree of life also in the " midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge " of good and evil. And the Lord God took the " man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to " dress it, and to keep it. And the Lord God " commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of " the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the " tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou " shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou " eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die ‡."

When, after the fatal transgression of this easy command,

* Gen. i. 26, 27. † Ib. ii. 7. ‡ Ib. 8 & 9. and 15—17.

command, God pronounced the sentence of judgment on the transgressors, he declares to the serpent, "Because thou hast done this, thou art "cursed above all cattle, and above every beast "of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and "dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, "and between thy seed and her seed; it shall "bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*." To man he declares, "Cursed is the ground for "thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the "days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall "it bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat the "herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face "shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the "ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust "thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return†."

But, notwithstanding this melancholy doom, God is represented as still prolonging the existence of our first parents, providing for their immediate comfort, and assuring them of a numerous posterity. "Adam called his wife's name "Eve, because she was the mother of all living. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord "God make coats of skins, and clothed them‡." Then follows a very remarkable passage, which is peculiarly worthy of attention, on this subject: "And

* Gen iii. 14, 15. † Ib. ver. 17—19. ‡ Ib. 20, 21.

"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is "become as one of us to know good and "evil. And now, lest he put forth his hand, "and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and "live for ever; therefore the Lord God sent him "forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground, "from whence he was taken. So he drove out "the man: and he placed at the east of the gar-"den of Eden, cherubins, and a flaming sword, "which turned every way, to keep the way of the "tree of life*."

From the entire of this account it seems clearly deducible, that man by his original constitution was destined for immortality. When God is said to have created man *after his own image*, surely it is no straining of this expression to interpret it as denoting not only reason and freedom of will, moral rectitude, and the power of dominion over inferior animals, but also a nature capable of and designed for immortality; without which all the preceding endowments, however exalted and splendid, would have been so transient and ineffectual, so vainly and unworthily bestowed. When, of all animated beings, it is asserted of man alone, that GOD *breathed* into his nostrils the breath of life, and that man became a living soul†; we cannot much dissent from those commentators,

* Genesis iii. 22, &c.

† I am aware that the words which are translated "living soul,"

mentators, who conceive the breath of life, thus *immediately* derived from God, partook of the immortality

soul," נפש חיה, are the same which are employed in Gen. i. 30, to denote all inferior animals in which "is life," or as it is more accurately rendered in the margin of our Bibles, "*a living soul.*" But my argument is, that man *alone* being made *after the image of God*, man *alone* being described, as having received from God *immediately* the breath of life; and man *alone* being represented capable of *living for ever*; by partaking of the tree of life; the whole tenour of the history marks him out as in his original nature destined for immortality; and that the divine promise of a *future deliverer*, inspiring a strong assurance of mercy, must have produced an humble but confident hope in every pious, reflecting and believing mind, of being ultimately restored to this privilege of immortality. This interpretation of the Sacred History is justified by the most respectable authorities ancient and modern. The *Targum* of *Onkelos*, though it retains in Gen. i. 30, the original expression, common to men and inferior animals, of a living soul; yet in Gen. ii. 7, substitutes the expression, of a spirit enjoying the capacity of speech, לרוח ממללא—and the Arabic version renders the same verse, "And Adam was made a rational soul;" thus shewing how strongly these translators felt the reasonableness of distinguishing the principle of life in man and inferior animals. And in this distinction, the Targum of Jonathan B. Uziel concurs with the Targum of Onkelos, in adopting the same expression in Gen. ii. 7. Vide Biblia Polyglotta Waltoni.

"It is not to be doubted," (says *Perrerius*) "that from "these few words, in which Moses has related the creation of "a rational spirit, it may be proved that the soul is immortal; "which

immortality of its divine Author, and that the living soul which man thus acquired, deserved that title much more eminently than the animating principle of any of the brute creation, all of which are described as formed with such different views, and sharing so inferior a degree of their Creator's favour. And, finally, to prove clearly that man was originally intended for immortality, we are told that the *tree of life* was placed in the midst of the garden; whose efficacy was such, that

"which Moses has frequently intimated both in this and his "other books." And *Rivetus* on this passage, disputes at large on the immortality of the soul. *S. Method. Conviv. Virg. p.* 75, asserts, "It is false doctrine, that the immortal "substance of the mind, which GOD himself *breathed* into "us, was generated along with the mortal and frail substance "of the body." Cyrill Alex. de Adorat. lib. x. Vol. I. p. 356, and Comment. in Joan, lib. v. p. 471, resolves the immortality of the soul into "the virtue and support of the divine breath "breathed into man." "Man," says Theodoret and several of the ancient Fathers, "must be certainly admitted to a noble "share of divine intelligence and ideas, since these were a privilege *breathed* into him by his Maker at his creation, a "dignity and eminence of nature superior to that of all other "animals."

The expression of the *image* of GOD also plainly implies the idea of the soul's immortality, according to the best commentators. Abarbinel explains it to mean, "an approach to the "divine likeness in understanding, freedom of choice, spirituality and immortality." And *Tertullian contra Marcion*, cap. ix. "Habent illas ubique *lineas* DEI, qua *immortalis* "anima,

that if man was permitted to take of it, he would *live for ever*. Can it be denied that these passages suggest some intelligible hint of immortal life, some idea at least of the capacity of the human soul to enjoy an eternal existence?

It will be said, all this relates to the state of man before his fall, but that by this fatal transgression the hope of immortality was totally cut off, and eternal death was the melancholy doom which every human being must look to as the close of his

"anima, qua libera, et sui arbitrii, qua prescia plerumque, "qua rationalis, capax intellectus et scientiæ." *Vatablus* and *Paulus Fagius* make this image to consist "in immortality, "innocency, holiness, and the other perfections of the soul, "as well as in man's dominion over inferior animals." The learned and judicious Edwards, in his Survey of the various Methods of Religion, Vol I. p. 13 & 17, observes, "Besides "the dominion over the creatures, and something in the out-"ward man, the image of God consists chiefly in the soul: "first, as this part of us is of an immaterial and spiritual na-"ture, and such is God, 'he is a Spirit,' John iv. 24. Again, "the soul of man is immortal, and therein is God's image and "representation. This indeed follows upon the former qua-"lity; it being immaterial and incorporeal, it must needs be "in its own nature incorruptible; herein we signally resemble "the Deity And therefore it is rightly asserted by St. Augus-"tin, that because of the immortality of the soul, though not "*only* for that, man is said to be made after God's image." Vide also Taylor's Scheme of Scripture Divinity, ch. v. the three last paragraphs, which express the same sentiments. Vide also Poli Synopsis, Patrick, and Bibliotheca Biblica on Genesis i. 26. and ii. 7.

his existence. Now to me the Sacred Narrative seems to imply the very contrary conclusion, and to hold out to penitent man the hope, that notwithstanding his privilege of enjoying eternal life *in this present world* was withdrawn, he yet might hope for the continuance or the renewal of his existence in another state. It may be remarked, that the very words of the curse denounced against him by his offended God, in which, if any where, this awful doom would be declared, seems not at all to convey it. Man had been described originally consisting of two distinct parts; he was "formed of the dust of the earth," and "God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and "man became a living soul." Now to the former part, and to the former part alone, does the letter of the curse confine itself. "In the sweat of thy face," says the divine Judge to fallen Adam, "shalt "thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; "for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, "and unto dust shalt thou return." Here the dissolution of the bodily frame, and its return to its original dust, is the only thing menaced; the extinction of that breath of life which God had inspired, the destruction of that living soul which man had been described as possessing, is not so much as hinted at.

But if from the letter we direct our attention to the spirit of the narrative, this conclusion seems

to

to acquire irresistible strength. It is admitted, that in the very condemnation of deluded man, his heavenly Judge tempered the severity of justice with mercy, and guarded against that despair which would have extinguished the vital principle of virtue *; by giving assurance of a deliverer to spring from the seed of the woman, who should bruise the head (that is, subdue the power and punish the malignity) of the serpent who had seduced them. If we admit the divine institution of sacrifice †, at this crisis, which is surely the most rational interpretation of the narrative concerning the beasts slain immediately after the fall; and of the sacrifices of Cain and Abel; it will follow, that the very mode in which this deliverance should be effected was not indistinctly pointed out: even that God would accept the life of the great Sacrifice, which the sacrifices now instituted prefigured, as a substitute for the life, and an atonement for the sins, of man.

But whether Adam could or could not conceive the particular mode in which it was to be effected, he certainly cherished a sure hope of future deliverance. Now let me ask, what hope could he have

* Vide Sherlock on the Use and Intent of Prophecy, Discourse III. p. 60.

† Vide on this subject, Taylor's Scheme of Scripture Divinity, chap. xiv.; and Dr. Magee's Second Sermon on Sacrifice and Atonement, with the notes.

have cherished, if he conceived of death as the final extinction of his being? If eternal annihilation was his own fate, what consolation could he derive from the promise of a future deliverer? What mixture of hope would have remained to sustain the energy of virtue, had he conceived of that death which inevitably awaited him and all his posterity, as a total extinction of being? I contend, therefore, that the very history of the creation and fall of man, not only suggested the idea, and gave an *intelligible hint* of a future state, but was calculated to inspire every serious and pious mind with an humble but assured hope, that they were in the hands of a merciful Judge, who, though he thought it necessary to remove them from this world by a corporeal dissolution, would yet preserve that breath of life, that living soul, which he had himself inspired, and which had been formed after the image of God, from total annihilation and eternal death.

Such seems to have been the conclusion naturally suggested by the history of the Fall. But this conclusion must have derived great additional clearness and strength, from the circumstances attending the very first instance of death inflicted upon man, combined with the knowledge of the divine attributes, which revelation and experience had supplied.

They saw, when "Cain brought of the fruit of

"the

" the ground an offering to the Lord; and Abel,
" he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and
" of the fat thereof: and the Lord had respect
" unto Abel and his offering, but unto Cain and to
" his offering he had not respect: and Cain was
" very wroth, and his countenance fell." God pointed out the unreasonableness of this wrath: For " the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou
" wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If
" thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?
" and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." But no admonition could correct the moroseness of his malignity; for " it came to pass when they
" were in the field, Cain rose up against Abel his
" brother, and slew him." Immediately divine justice arraigns the murderer, and pronounces his condemnation: for God said, " What hast thou
" done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth
" unto me from the ground. And now art thou
" cursed from the earth, which hath opened her
" mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy
" hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall
" not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. A
" fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be upon the
" earth*."

Yet the severity of the divine justice was tempered with mercy: when the wretched criminal deprecates the infliction of his punishment as " greater than

* Genesis iv. 3—12.

than he could bear," and, distracted by the horrors of conscience, views in every human being an avenger eager to retaliate his cruelty on himself, exclaiming, "it shall come to pass, that every one who findeth me, shall slay me," God mercifully assures him his life should be protected, and sets a mark upon him, lest any finding him should kill him. He is indeed banished from the sacred spot where the immediate presence of the Lord displayed its glory; but yet abundant time is afforded him for repentance, his life is protracted, and we find his family flourishing and numerous: This is entirely conformable to our ideas of the divine attributes. But contemplate the fate of Abel, and let us consider what would have been its effect upon the mind of every human being, if they conceived death was total annihilation. He perished in consequence of his acting in a manner conformable to the will, and acceptable in the sight of God. "By faith," says the Apostle, "Abel offered unto "God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain; by "which he obtained witness that he was righteous, "God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being "dead, yet speaketh *." What is the plain meaning of the Apostle's declaration? This, assuredly, that the death of Abel speaketh the immortality of the soul, in language too plain to be misunderstood. Nor can we conceive that the circumstances attending

* Heb. xi. 4.

attending this first infliction of death upon man, could have been ordered by Providence so as to testify more plainly this great truth of a future state of recompense, had this been the sole purpose for which they were designed. To conceive that a just and merciful God should openly approve the sacrifice of Abel, and yet permit him, in consequence of that very action, to suffer a cruel death *, which put a final period to his existence;

* This transaction has been viewed in the same light by some very respectable commentators. Paulus Fagius observes, "His blood poured forth, witnesses that you put him to "death. Let this comfort the pious, who are slain for their "justice, that they still live with God, and are his chief care." Vide Poli Synopsis.—Taylor, p. 102, observes, "The Pa-"triarchs before and after Job, and the Israelites before "Christ, had a notion of a future state. By sacrifices was "plainly shewn, that a way was open to the divine favour and "acceptance; and the favour of God imports happiness; which "to Abel, who was for that very reason, because he was ac-"cepted of God, unjustly slain, could be only in a *future* "state; Heb. xi. 4, and dying on account of that faith, 'he "yet speaketh' an invisible future state of reward. The trans-"lation of Enoch and Elijah in two distant ages were well "known demonstrations of a future state of reward and glory. "The Jews were certainly acquainted with God, and angels, "and heaven, where both resided, Gen. xxii. 11.; and the "connexion between this world and heaven, by the ministry "of angels, was clearly represented to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 12.; "they must therefore have a notion of another and a better "world." Vide Taylor's Scheme, ch. xxiv. p. 102.

It is likewise remarkable, that the Pelagians turned the death of Abel to an argument, that there was no evil in death,

existence; while his murderer, whom the same God openly condemned, was yet permitted to live; all this is so monstrous, so contradictory to the divine attributes, as to prove beyond possibility of doubt, that this event was permitted to take place, partly at least, in order to shew that death was not a final extinction of being, but on the contrary a passage from this world to another, where the righteous should be recompensed for their adherence to the will of their heavenly

death, because it conveyed him, and does all such, to a more happy and glorious state; the fallacy of which St. Augustin exposes, by distinguishing between the act, which was that of murder in Cain, and the consequence, which was martyrdom in Abel. St. Augustini Opus imperfect. contra Julian, lib. vi. tom. x. col. 1355.—Doddridge also interprets the words "being dead yet speaketh," as referring to the testimony borne as it were to a future state, by his story, &c. Vide his Family Expositor on Heb. xi. 4.—But perhaps the most decisive testimony is that of Philo, who in his tract on the subject of *the Evil plotting against the Good*, comments on the death of Abel at large, and amongst other things observes, "Abel (paradoxical as it may appear) though cut off, "lives; he is cut off in the judgment of the unwise, but he "lives in God a life of bliss; and this the divine oracle attests, "for it expressly declares, he cries out against the criminal "by whom he suffered: but if he no longer existed, how "could he thus cry out? Thus the wise man who appears "deprived of this mortal life, lives an immortal one; but the "wicked man, living in guilt, is, with respect to that blessed "life, dead," &c.—Vide Philonis Opera, p. 127, Letter *c*.—Vide also my learned friend, the Rev. Peter Roberts' note on this passage, in his very useful Work on the Harmony of the Epistles,

heavenly Father, in opposition to suffering and death, by a sure and eternal reward.

In the next chapter*, another fact is recorded, which surely conveys an intelligible hint of another state of existence; by giving an instance of one mortal, distinguished for piety, being translated to that state without passing through death†: For we are told of Enoch, that he "walked

Epistles, p. 505. He observes, that "the words of God, "Gen. iv. 6 & 7, probably gave rise to a dispute about the "justice of God, which Abel's insisting on, was, with such an "evil disposition as Cain's, likely to provoke the fatal resent-"ment that followed. In this opinion the Jewish comments "agree; and the examples of a faith which was maintained to "death, being a lesson to posterity, it is no hard straining of "language to say, that Abel preaches or speaks still to us of "the purity and firmness of his faith in a future life; because "as to this life, all his hopes and interest vanished the moment "in which he risked the loss of the present."

* Genesis v. 24.

† This is the clear interpretation established by the authority of the Apostle. By others, the original has been differently explained; "he did not appear," or "was not found," say the Samaritan and the Septuagint versions; the Syriac, "he ceased to be;" the Arabic, "he died." The Targum of Onkelos indeed asserts, "he did not appear, and God did not cause him to die;" but all unite in declaring that God took him; and the direct declaration of this will establish a future state with equal clearness, even if he passed through death. This fact must therefore have *suggested an intelligible hint of a future state* from the first, however interpreted. Vide Biblia Polyglotta Waltoni.

" walked with God, and he was not: for God " took him." It has been said, that this fact is related with a studied obscurity and brevity, as if to conceal the idea of another life *. But this is surely an unfounded inference; it is related in exactly the same style and manner as every other fact in this part of the patriarchal history; and it is so plain, that the only possible way of concealing or obscuring the information it contains, would be entirely to suppress the fact. Enough is told to justify the observation of the Apostle, " By " faith Enoch was translated, that he should not " see death; and was not found, because God " had translated him: for before his translation " he had this testimony, that he pleased God †." And the inference of the author of Ecclesiasticus, " Enoch pleased the Lord and was translated, " being an example of repentance to all genera- " tions ‡."

The next circumstance I shall notice in the history of the Patriarchs, is the command of God to Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. As to the purport and object of this command, I adopt with the greatest pleasure the opinion of the learned Warburton §, who with equal ingenuity and truth, (as

* Warburton, Book V. sect. v. subs. ii. Vol. iv. p. 322.

† Heb. xi. 5. ‡ Ecclus. xliv. 16.

§ Divine Leg. Book VI. sect. v.; the very satisfactory Dissertation on the command to sacrifice Isaac.

(as appears to me) has proved, that when God says to Abraham, 'Take now thy son, thine only son 'Isaac,' &c. "the command is merely an infor- "mation by action, instead of words, of the great "sacrifice of Christ for the redemption of man- "kind, given at the earnest request of Abraham, "who longed impatiently to see Christ's day; and "is that passage of sacred history referred to by "our Lord, where he says to the unbelieving Jews, "'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; "and he saw it, and was glad.'" To this able writer I refer, for the proof of this being the true explanation of this contested passage; and I entirely agree with him in the consequences he deduces from it. "Two great ends," says he*, "seem to be gained by this interpretation: the "one, to free the command from a supposed vio- "lation of natural law; the other, to support the "connexion and dependency between the two "revelations; for this interpretation makes the "history of the command a direct prophecy of "Christ as Redeemer of the world."

I have introduced this part of the sacred history for the purpose of quoting another part of this learned Writer's reasoning on this passage, which appears important on the present subject. "Of "the principal reason of this command," says he †, "the

* Divine Leg. Book VI. sect. v. Vol. v. p. 223.

† Ibid. Vol. v. p. 238.

" the words of Jesus are a convincing proof.
" Nay, I might go farther, and say that this is not
" the only place where the true reason of the com-
" mand is plainly hinted at. The Author of the
" Epistle to the Hebrews, speaking of this very
" command, says, By faith Abraham, when he was
" tried, offered up Isaac, accounting that God
" was able to raise him up even from the dead,
" from whence also he received him in a figure;
" ΕΝ ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΗ, in a parable: a mode of
" information either by words or actions, which
" consists in putting one thing for another. Now,
" in a writer who regarded this commanded action
" as a representative information of the redemp-
" tion of mankind, nothing could be more fine or
" easy than this expression. For, though Abra-
" ham did not indeed receive Isaac restored to life
" after a real dissolution, yet the son being in this
" action to represent Christ suffering death for the
" sins of the world, when the father brought him
" safe from Mount Moriah after three days (dur-
" ing which the son was in a state of condemnation
" to death) the father plainly received him, under
" the character of Christ's representative, as re-
" stored from the dead. For, as his being brought
" to the Mount, there bound, and laid upon the
" altar, figured the death and sufferings of Christ,
" so his being taken from thence alive, as properly
" figured Christ's resurrection from the dead.

"With the highest propriety therefore and elegance "of speech, might Abraham be said to receive "Isaac from the dead in a parable, or in re-"presentation."

Adopting this (as appears to me) just and ingenious explanation of this piece of sacred history, it is obvious, and indeed is confessed by this learned writer, that the doctrine of a resurrection to life, even of Christ's resurrection, must have been known to Abraham and Isaac, as well as to their families. Can we then suppose so important a truth would have been by them suppressed? No; it was assuredly communicated from them to the succeeding Patriarchs, and formed the support of their virtue and the source of their consolation, through all the sorrows and sufferings of their eventful lives. True it is, the peculiar purposes of the divine economy did not permit the Jewish Lawgiver to employ it as the sanction of his Laws, which were to be enforced by an immediate extraordinary Providence, and therefore he was not allowed to promulgate it so plainly as to make it a direct article of the popular creed; but it was intimated with sufficient clearness to be discernible to minds of a superior class, capable of reflection, and adapted to rise to greater heights of piety, exhibit bright examples of virtue, and prepare the way for the full manifestation of the counsels and the mercies of God, by that Jesus, the only-begotten

Son of God, whose sufferings and resurrection for the redemption and justification of man, the remarkable transaction we have been now considering so plainly represented and prefigured.

But to establish the fact, that the conduct of the Patriarchs was influenced by the prospect of a future life, I should choose to rely on an authority superior to that of any article of mere human composition, even the authority of the Apostle to the Hebrews, who has distinctly stated and clearly illustrated this position: "By "faith," says he, "Abraham, when he was called "to go up into a place, which he should after "receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he "went out, not knowing whither he went. By "faith he sojourned in the land of promise as "in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles "with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of "the same promise. For he looked for a city, "which hath foundations, whose builder and "maker is God *." And again, speaking of the Patriarchs, "These all (says the Apostle †) died "in faith, not having received the promises, but "having seen them afar off, and were persuaded "of them, and confessed that they were strangers "and pilgrims upon earth. For they that say "such things, declare plainly that they seek a "country. And truly if they had been mindful of

* Heb. xi. 8—10. † Ibid. xi. 13—16.

"of that country from whence they came out, "they might have had opportunity to have re- "turned: but now they desire a better country, "that is, an heavenly. Wherefore God is not "ashamed to be called their God *: for he hath "prepared for them a city."

In this passage, the Apostle plainly refers to the remarkable declaration of Jacob to Pharaoh, when that monarch inquired from the venerable Patriarch, "How old art thou? And he answered, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an "hundred and thirty years; few and evil have "the days of the years of my life been, and I have "not attained to the days of the years of my "fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage †." In truth had there been no state of existence beyond the present life, this Patriarch would have received very

* On this subject, Witsius, in his Œconomia Fœderum, Lib. III. cap. ii. Sect. v. p 262, observes, "When God de- "clares himself a God to any, it includes eternal life; for "when God from his free grace gives himself to man, he "gives him every thing, for in himself he is every thing: "man therefore finds in him a *shield* against all evil, and "*a exceeding great reward* (according to the promise to "Abraham, Gen. xv. 1.) And what more can he desire to "secure full and perfect happiness, which includes eternity? "Whence the Apostle joins these two, Hebrews xi. 16: Now "God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath "prepared for them a city."

† Gen. xlvii. 8 & 9.

very inadequate proofs of that distinguished favour, with the hope of which God encouraged him, when, in the vision at Luz, he declared himself "the God of his father Abraham, and of "Isaac; and that he would give the land whereon "he lay, to him and to his seed; and that in his "seed all the families of the earth should be "blessed*." Nor was this all; to the promise of this public distinction and general blessing was added a promise of personal favour and protection; "And behold, saith God, I am with thee, "and will keep thee in all places whither thou "goest, and will bring thee again into this land; "for I will not leave thee, until I have done that "which I have spoken to thee of†." This promise was certainly fulfilled to a certain degree, in the preservation of the Patriarch and his family during his eventful history; yet the life of Jacob was undoubtedly embittered from the very beginning with disappointment and sorrow ‡: from his twenty years of exile and laborious servitude under Laban; the terror of his brother's vengeance; the violent passions and great misconduct of his children; the premature death of his beloved wife Rachel; the early loss of his favourite child Joseph, which so afflicted him, that "he refused "to be comforted, saying, I will go down into the "grave

* Gen. xxviii. 13 & 14. † Ibid. xxviii. 15.

‡ Vide from chap. xxviii. to chap. l.

"grave unto my son, mourning*;" the anxiety which the apprehension of famine must have excited; and his still greater terror at the apprehended loss of Benjamin, which wrung from him this pathetic complaint unto his remaining sons, "Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph "is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take "Benjamin away: all these things are against "me†." And when Reuben undertook for his security, how melancholy the perseverance of his refusal! "My son shall not go down with you: "for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if "mischief befal him by the way in which ye go, "then shall ye bring down my grey hairs with "sorrow to the grave‡." And when at length the pressure of famine compelled his assent, how strongly does the solemnity of his parting benediction bespeak the anguish of his heart; "Take "your brother, and arise, go again unto the man. "And God Almighty give you mercy before the "man, that he may send away your other brother, "and Benjamin: if I be bereaved of my children, "I am bereaved§." I mention these circumstances, to shew that then as well as now (until God undertook, by an immediate and extraordinary Providence, to support the interests of virtue)

* Gen. xxxvii. 35. † Ib. xlii. 36.
‡ Gen. xlii. 38. § Ch. xliii. 13 & 14.

virtue *) human nature required the prospect of another life to sustain piety and obedience, under the trials to which they were exposed; and this increases the probability that such a prospect was afforded, when such trials were imposed by the immediate agency of God.

The life of the Jewish Lawgiver affords a remarkable instance in confirmation of the truth of this position. In his youth, grieved and wearied at beholding the cruel oppression of his countrymen, he is led to attempt their deliverance, and sacrifice for this purpose all prospects of regal grandeur and present enjoyment †. But he is totally and lamentably disappointed; rejected and despised by those who were the objects of his generous patriotism, he is compelled, in order to preserve his life, to fly into exile, where he remains for forty years; and then at the age of fourscore ‡ is

* The learned Witsius expresses this argument in the following strong terms: "Extra controversiam est Deum "præstantissimum aliquid, et in quo, supra cæteros minus "Numinis reverentes, eximii essent, clarissimis illis Patri-"archis promisisse, quando se Deum ipsorum nuncupabat. "Nihil autem supra cæteros homines eximium adeo in hac "terra obtinuerunt, quod promissi hujus magnitudinem "æquaret; multi improbi in terra Canaan alibique vixerunt, "restat ergo ut altius hæc spectarent, et ad æternam cœles-"temque vitam pertinerent."

† Vide Exod. ii. 11, et seq. ‡ Exod. vii. 7.

is compelled to quit his retirement, place himself at the head of his nation, expose himself to the resentment of the Egyptian monarch; and after having escaped this, is constantly harassed with the murmurs, the terrors, the idolatries, the rebellions of this wayward race: even his own brother and sister join in opposing his authority. This scene of severe trial lasts for forty years, in a dreary desert, surrounded by a discontented multitude; and at the end of this long period, he is not permitted to enjoy the glory of conquering the promised land, or witnessing the happiness of his nation's settlement there, but is barely allowed to see a distant prospect of this long-wished-for resting-place, and then hurried away by the sudden stroke of death. Yet this is the fate of a man of exemplary piety; who, though sometimes in the heaviness of his spirit he is driven to entreat of God, "If thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, "out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; "and let me not see my wretchedness*;" yet still preserves to God constant resignation, and to his ungrateful countrymen unabated affection.

Now we may ask, Is it not natural to suppose that God, who employed this distinguished Character as the chosen instrument for communicating his Law to the whole Jewish nation, should have sustained him in so severe a trial, by the clear prospect

* Numb. xi. 15.

pect of a future recompense? And though the peculiar purposes of the divine economy would not permit him to employ a future recompense as the sanction of his Laws, is it not extremely probable that he communicated this joyful hope to those select and pious men who shared his burdens and assisted his councils? Or, when they compared his character with his fate, and observed that God sustained his bodily and mental powers with supernatural vigour, to the last moment of his life, so that at the age of "one hundred and twenty "year," immediately before his death, "his eye "was not dim, nor his natural force abated *;" when they observed all this, could they suppose that on a sudden his existence was closed for ever, and the favour of his God withdrawn †? Surely this could never be the conclusion of any pious or

* Deut. xxxiv. 7.

† On this subject the learned and judicious Edwards makes an important observation. Vol. I. p. 168, he is employed in proving, "that the benefit of the legal sacrifices "expiated the offences of all true penitents, though they "were never so great." And he confirms it thus: "Is it "not acknowledged, and that because it is manifest from "several instances, that the crimes of persons have been "forgiven and pardoned, though they themselves were not "exempted from the penalty? Moses' death was the re-"compense of his unbelief, though none doubted of his ex-"piring in the divine favour. David was punished with the "death of his child, though we read that his *sin was par-*

"*doned.*

or reflecting mind. How much more just and rational is the reasoning of the Apostle to the Hebrews, on this subject, even if we were to pay no regard to his inspired authority: "By "faith," says he, "Moses, when he was come "to years, refused to be called the son of Pha- "raoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer af- "fliction with the people of God, than to enjoy "the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the "treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto "the recompense of the reward. By faith he "forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the "king: for he endured, as seeing him who is "invisible *."

Finally, if on considering the entire history of the Patriarchs, and comparing the decided declarations of the divine favour towards them, with the very inadequate effects of that favour in this life, the certainty of a future recompense was not a natural as well as a just conclusion obvious to every pious, reflecting and unprejudiced mind;

"*died*". Josiah was justly snatched away in battle, be- "cause he engaged in it against the divine will and com- "mand; but yet he '*died in peace*,' i. e. in the favour of God, "and was translated to the place of everlasting peace and "happiness†."

* 2 Samuel xii. 13 & 14.

† Compare 2 Chron. xxxv. 22. with 25. and Jer. xxii. 10.

* Heb. xi. 24—27.

mind; could our blessed Lord, when he urged this conclusion against the Sadduces, have charged them with error, because they "knew not the "Scriptures, nor the power of God *;" that is, because they did not consider the Scripture history as they ought, or argue fairly from the divine attributes? In answer to their difficulty against the belief of a resurrection, deducible, as they conceived, from the Mosaic Law respecting marriage, our Saviour replies, "Do ye not therefore "err, because ye know not the Scriptures, nor the "power of God? For when they shall rise from "the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in "marriage; but are as the angels which are in "heaven. And as touching the dead, that they "rise; have ye not read in the book of Moses, "how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of "Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the "God of the dead, but of the living; ye therefore "do greatly err †." This is not the language of one announcing a new argument, which, before his application of it, had been utterly undiscoverable by human sagacity; but rather of one drawing an obvious conclusion from plain facts, which nothing but wilful blindness or culpable prejudice had prevented from being previously seen.

I therefore contend it is reasonable to suppose, that

* Matt. xxii. 29. † Mark xii. 24—27.

that minds neither inattentive nor prejudiced, but on the contrary candid, pious and reflecting, may have argued in a somewhat similar manner, and from the Scripture history of the Patriarchs concluded the divine favour towards them was not confined to the present life; though no one, before our blessed Lord, had established this conclusion with such clear reasoning and such irresistible force.

We may further observe, that though the Jewish Lawgiver did not directly promulgate the doctrine of a future state, as the sanction of his Laws; yet there is no reason why he should suppress any declaration of that doctrine made by others, or why we should distort any expression which naturally conveys that doctrine, when recorded by Moses as used by others, on a supposition that it was not intended to convey it. I therefore see no reason to doubt, that the remarkable expression ascribed by Moses to Balaam, "Let me die the "death of the righteous, and let my last end* be "like his," really means what it obviously imports, a wish to die the death of the righteous, in order to enjoy the happiness of another life, which the righteous only can share.

Balaam

* Taylor affirms, and it seems on good grounds, that the word אחרית translated "last end," means strictly an after or future state, not only here but in many other places cited in this argument; of which as they occur. Vide Taylor's Scheme of Divinity, ch. xxiv. p. 103.

Balaam was certainly gifted at this time with a portion of the prophetic spirit, though he abused this favour of his God; and the interpretation now assigned is surely more natural than that of Warburton, which explains these words as merely expressing his wish, "Let me die in a mature old "age, after a life of health and peace, with all "my posterity flourishing about me; as was the "lot of the righteous observers of the Law *:" an interpretation which appears most forced and unnatural.

It is an obvious remark connected with this subject, that the clauses of the Mosaic Law directed against those who had familiar spirits, and against wizards and necromancers, which are repeated at least four different times in the Pentateuch †, and also the continuance of this superstition, notwithstanding that all these prohibitions were frequently enforced with the greatest rigour, a continuance so clearly instanced by the history of Saul, and particularly by his own recourse to the witch of Endor ‡; all these circumstances prove that the existence of the soul in a separate state was deeply fixed in the popular belief among the Jews, and that the abuse of this tenet form a leading feature of the popular superstition; a circumstance the learned Prelate, so frequently alluded

* Div. Leg. Vol. v. p. 143. † Lev. xix. 31. xx. 6. xx. 27. and Deut. xviii. 11.

‡ Vide 1 Sam. xxviii.

alluded to, appears to have forgotten, when he asserted in such an unqualified manner, "that "the Jews under the Mosaic Law, never ex- "pressed the least hopes or fears of a future "state, or so much as any common curiosity "concerning it*."

* Div. Leg. Book VI. sect. vi. Vol. v. 395.—It is unnecessary to enter into a minute comparison of the grounds on which Warburton maintains his assertion, and those on which I oppose it; such a comparison can be satisfactorily made, only by an impartial examination of both our arguments.—I would here merely observe, that of the circumstances I have noticed in this section, some, and those not the least important, are either not at all or very slightly adverted to by the learned Prelate, where he professes to consider the texts adduced by his adversaries. For example, in the consideration of the texts from Genesis, &c. he takes *no notice* of the mention made of the *tree of life*, of the death of Abel, or the history of Moses. Vidd. Div. Leg. Book VI. sect ii. iii. & iv.

PART III.

LECTURE IV.

SECT. II.

LECTURE IV.

SECT. II.—*Doctrine of a future state, why not more clearly and frequently inculcated in the Pentateuch—or under the Judges—Gradual improvement of the Jews—Future state gradually promulgated suitably to this improvement—By David in Ps.* xvi. xvii. xxxvi. xlix. ciii. cxv. cxxxix.—*By Solomon in Proverbs, passim, particularly in ch.* iv. viii. xiv. xxiv; *still more fully in Ecclesiastes, of which work this doctrine is the basis, particularly in ch.* iii. viii. xi. *and at the conclusion of the book—How further impressed on the Jews by miraculous facts—By three resurrections from the dead—By the translation of Elijah—This doctrine frequently intimated and gradually taught with the greatest clearness by the Prophets—Isaiah—Jeremiah—Ezekiel—Hosea—Joel—Amos—Nahum—And above all, Daniel—And also in the book of Job.*

PART III.

LECT. IV.

SECT. II.

A FUTURE STATE KNOWN TO THE JEWS.

DANIEL xii. 2.

"MANY of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall "awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and "everlasting contempt."

THE passages we have hitherto adduced, from the history recorded by the Jewish Lawgiver, and which shew that he himself believed a future state of retribution, and contain such proofs of it as would naturally impress that belief on every pious and reflecting mind; have been chiefly taken from the Book of Genesis. In the remaining part of the Pentateuch we are not to wonder that the rewards and punishments of a future life are not expressly introduced. It has been shewn that God exercised over the Jews an extraordinary Providence, rewarding obedience and punishing transgression, whether national or personal, by immediate and temporal blessings

and calamities; and that this system was rendered necessary by the intellectual character and peculiar situation of the Jewish people, as the only mode of counteracting their carnal dispositions and idolatrous propensities; the only mode adapted to their short-sighted views, their inadequate ideas of the divine perfections, and their unsteady faith in the divine promises.

This system was pursued, first during that most evident display of divine and miraculous power, at the promulgation of the Law, and the settlement of the chosen people in the promised land; and afterwards under their judges, when for above four hundred years the Jewish nation continued, if I may so express it, under the immediate tutelage and direct control of Jehovah. During this rude and yet unsettled period, the nation seems (naturally speaking) unfit to receive or improve any further religious instructions. Hence, during this period we find no inspired teacher, whose admonitions or prophecies have been handed down as a part of the sacred volume, except some prophecies briefly and incidentally mentioned in the history of the Judges and the book of Samuel, relating merely to immediate and temporal occurrences. No addition was now made to the instructions delivered by Moses, no further development of the divine plans vouchsafed. But after a sufficiently long trial of the immediate

power of God to guide and protect the chosen people, they were permitted to establish a regal government, and rise into notice among the surrounding nations: their foes were subdued by Saul and David; a magnificent temple was erected by Solomon, where the public worship prescribed by the Mosaic ritual was conducted with the strictest regularity, and accompanied with all the attractions of pomp and harmony and splendor which could rouse the attention and command the reverence, not only of the Jews themselves, but of the surrounding nations. A lucrative trade was opened with the East*, which continued in a great measure to be conducted by the Jews, from David to Ahaz, above two hundred and fifty years. A great part of this time the Jews were powerful and wealthy; their minds were gradually enlightened by commerce and softened by peace, and the conviction of Jehovah's overruling providence gradually established by a still increasing length of experience; and thus a foundation laid for a more firm reliance on the divine promises respecting a future life.

And while the temporal discipline and fortune of the Jews thus prepared the way for the reception of religious instructions, we observe that Samuel

* Compare 1 Kings ix. 26, with 2 Kings xvi. 6.; and Vide Prideaux's Connections, Book I. from p. 7 to 17.

Samuel founded the schools of the Prophets, where numbers of the Levites, and probably other pious Jews, were trained from their youth to study and expound the word and the will of God, to warn the people against idolatry, impiety, and vice, and become instruments of extending the knowledge of the Jewish religion, and the worship of the great Jehovah. We now perceive Providence raising up for them instructors, first in the persons of their two most distinguished kings, David and Solomon, the former as a prophet, the latter chiefly as a moral sage: their works, from the dignity of their authors, and from the very form of their compositions, must have been extremely popular: the pious hymns of the inspired Psalmist, praising the wonderful works of God for his chosen people, and adorning the sentiments of piety with all the charms of poetry and music, must have been read with avidity and remembered with delight; and the sententious maxims of the royal Preacher, the pride of his nation, for wisdom, power, and majesty, could scarcely fail of exciting attention to religious truth and moral duty.

We after these behold a series of prophets, delivering their admonitions and predictions, with the most intrepid resolution and the most awful menaces, to the kings and the assembled multitudes of Judah and Israel. We see some of their predictions

predictions immediately accomplished in the most important public events; and therefore their remaining prophecies must have excited general attention and anxious expectation. In truth, the schools of the prophets, established first by Samuel, supplied for ages the civil historians as well as the religious instructors of Judea; and the most distinguished prophets were so deeply engaged in public events, that their lives and writings were blended with every thing interesting in history, and preserved as parts of the national records.

The important doctrine of a future state of retribution was by these various inspired teachers gradually developed with perpetually increasing clearness and force, as the circumstances of the Jewish people required its promulgation, as well from the extension of their views by the improvement of their intellectual character, as from the gradual cessation of that extraordinary providential superintendence which became unnecessary for the support of religious and moral principle in proportion as the people became more sensible of the perpetual providence and moral attributes of the Divinity, and therefore more capable of being duly impressed with the divine promises of a future retribution.

And here, though the learned Prelate so often alluded to, hurried away it should seem by a zeal for

for establishing his system on the broadest possible basis, seems originally to have maintained that no ideas of a future state were to be found amongst the Jews, previous to the Captivity; yet he afterwards found it necessary to admit they were gradually inculcated by the *Prophets subsequent to David**. But assuredly he ought to have included this inspired Psalmist in the number of those who promulgated this great truth, not indeed with the same clearness as the last prophets, but yet sufficiently to prove his own firm belief of it, and to suggest it to the consideration of every pious and reflecting mind.

In Psalm xvi. after solemnly attesting his warm attachment to the pious, that "his delight was upon the saints that were upon the earth, and upon such as excel in virtue;" he declares his firm confidence in the mercy and protection of his God, and his full assurance of a future state: "I have set God always before me: "for he is on my right hand, therefore I shall not "fall. Wherefore my heart was glad, and my "glory rejoiced: my flesh also shall rest in hope. "For why? thou shalt not leave my soul in hell; "neither shalt thou suffer thy holy One to see "corruption. Thou shalt shew me the path of "life; in thy presence is the fulness of joy: and "at

* Vide Warburton, Vol. v. p. 9, and the first section of this Lecture, p. 190 to 193.

"at thy right hand there is pleasure for ever-
"more*." It is true, the entire passage is prophetic of our Lord's resurrection, to whom alone the words, "thou shalt not suffer thy holy One to see corruption," are applicable, as the apostle Peter † argues with the Jews. But assuredly the Prophet had a clear idea of future eternal happiness, and a firm confidence that he would himself enjoy it.

The next Psalm is not less express: he here opposes the sensual enjoyments on which the wicked fix their desires, to the pure celestial happiness of another life: "Deliver me, O Lord,
"from the ungodly, which is a sword of thine;
"from the men of thy hand, O Lord, from the
"men, I say, and from the evil world, which have
"their portion in this life," &c. "But as for me,
"I will behold thy presence in righteousness: and
"when

* In this passage I use the translation of our Prayer Book; it seems clearer than that in our Bible, and full as accurate. In the meaning of the three last verses, all the interpretations agree; except that the Syriac translates the last clause, "I "shall be satisfied with the pleasures of victory at thy right "hand." Vide Biblia Waltoni. Yet even this does not exclude the idea of eternity; "נצח æternitatem significat, sic "dictam quasi victoriam temporis," says *Rivetus*, and adds, "Nomen hîc in adverbii naturam transit; est hoc adjunctum "perpetuum beatitudinis, quæ alioqui beatitudo non esset, "si perpetua non foret." Vide Poli Synopsin.

† Vide Acts ii. 29, &c.

" when I *awake* * up after thy likeness, I shall be " satisfied with it."

Thus

* The word translated " awake," seems by an apt metaphor to mean, awakening from death to life, יקץ. It is used in this sense in Isaiah xxvi. 19, and Daniel xii. 2, where it can bear no other sense. Vide infra.

This passage was adduced by Leland, to prove the same point as I employ it for; and Warburton with his *peculiar* manner, observes, " In this the dissenter Leland, as I remem- " ber, in *some of his things*, seems much to triumph; but I " shall shew that it means nothing less." Warburton proceeds to observe, that the words our translators render " *shall have their portion in this life*," ought to have been, " shall have their portion in *this life of theirs*;" i. e. " shall " be *perfectly prosperous*." This, as seems to me, may be admitted, without affecting either mine or Leland's argument; the entire force of which lies in the *contrast* the Psalmist draws between the wicked, who are thus *perfectly prosperous*, and who transmit this prosperity even beyond their own lives, to *their children*; and his own expectation, which is, most literally, " I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied in awaking, with thy likeness." The Septuagint reads, " In righteousness shall I be seen " by thy countenance; I shall be satisfied when thy glory " shall appear:" and with this the Arabic and Ethiopic agree. The Syriac reads, " I shall be satisfied when thy fidelity shall awake;" " and this," says Warburton " means " only, God's glorious and powerful interposition in David's " PRESENT rescue from his enemies hands." But let me ask, what then becomes of the contrast between the expectation of the Psalmist, and the fortune of those who are *perfectly prosperous*, and leave this prosperity to their *children*? Interpret David's expectation as of *present* deliverance,

and

Thus again, in Psalm xxi. (which appears to me principally prophetic of the Messiah's glory, though several commentators conceive it to be spoken of David himself alone) celebrating the divine mercy, which distinguished the king, of whom he speaks, with the blessings of goodness, and set a crown of pure gold upon his head; the Psalmist adds, "He asked life of thee, "and thou gavest him a long life: even for ever "and ever. His honour is great in thy salvation; "glory, and great worship shalt thou lay upon "him *. For thou shalt give him everlasting feli- "city; and make him glad with the joy of thy "countenance."

In

and the passage is obscure, unmeaning and forced; take it in its obvious meaning of a future happiness, it is clear, rational, and beautiful. The former interpretation, therefore, could be justified only by the *certainty* that the Psalmist had and could have *no* idea of a future life; which is a plain *petitio principii*, a logical error with which all Warburton's interpretations appear to me to be infected; though he charges his opponents with exactly a similar *petitio principii* on their part, Vol. v. p. 157. The Public must decide.

* Our Bible translates the fifth verse, "Honour and majesty *hast* thou laid upon him," instead of "*shalt*," which makes the text less decisive. Undoubtedly the original will bear this sense, yet it seems not so natural as the other; and the Targum of Jerusalem, the Septuagint, the Ethiopic, the Arabic and the Vulgate versions, all use the future tense. The Syriac only agrees in adopting the past tense in this and the next clause But all unite in the sense of the fourth verse, "a life for ever and ever." Vide Biblia Waltoni.

In Psalm xlix. the inspired author * with unusual solemnity demands attention to the doctrine

* The author of this Psalm is uncertain; and some verses, particularly the 5th, 8th, and 9th, are obscure. I use the translation of our Bible, which appears to follow the original very closely; indeed so closely as to retain its obscurities. Houbigant, in his version, removes these obscurities by some very slight alterations of the original text, which seem perfectly justifiable. The 5th verse (with him the 6th) he translates, "Why should I fear in the evil day, because that "misery surrounds me?" and justifies the change, by an easy and obvious alteration of the text. And the 9th (with him the 10th) he renders, "Qui desinit in sæculum, "adhuc vivet, non in perpetuum videbit foveam, etiamsi vi- "debit eam;" and his criticism on this verse, if admitted, would directly establish the doctrine for which we contend. "In this verse," says he, "is contained the enigma "which the Psalmist prepared for, in the 4th verse; viz. that "though man must pay the debt of nature, yet he would "survive his fate, and would not eternally remain in the pit. "And then the Psalmist, on account of this hope of the im- "mortality proposed to man, reproaches him with not pro- "viding for this immortality, but limiting his hopes to the "present life, and thus becoming like the brutes." This interpretation Houbigant justifies, by a mere alteration of the punctuation in the original. Vide Houbigant. But there is scarcely any ambiguity of meaning, or difference of interpretation, as to the 14th & 15th verses, on which my argument depends. The Ethiopic, the Syriac and the Arabic versions all give the same sense. The Arabic is, if possible, more exclusively applicable to a future life in ver. 15: "But God "will free my soul from the power of the grave, when he shall "receive it," i. e. my soul. Bishop Patrick, who was not sedulous

trine he purposes to enforce: "O hear ye this, "all ye people; give ear all ye inhabitants of the "world." The doctrine thus solemnly promulgated, is the folly of the wicked, who trust in their riches, and forget the approach of death, which strips them of all, and exposes them to the vengeance of God, whom riches cannot disarm. "They that trust in their wealth, and boast them- "selves in the multitude of their riches, none of "them can by any means redeem his brother, nor "give to God a ransom for him, (for the redemp- "tion of their souls is precious, and it ceaseth for "ever)

dulous to discover in the Old Testament indications of a future state, applies both these verses to the resurrection. But Horne's paraphrase is so strikingly beautiful, I cannot refrain from transcribing it. Ver. 14: "The high and mighty ones of "the earth, who cause people to fear, and nations to tremble "around them, must one day crowd the grave; in multitude "and impotence, though not in innocence, resembling sheep "driven and confined by the butcher in his house of slaughter. "There death, that ravening wolf, shall feed sweetly on them, "and devour his long-expected prey in silence and darkness; "until the glorious morning of the resurrection dawn, when "the once oppressed and afflicted righteous, risen from the "dead, and sitting with their Lord in judgment, shall have the "dominion over their cruel enemies, whose faded beauty, "withered strength and departed glory, shall display to men "and angels, the vanity of that confidence which is not placed "in God."—Warburton interprets "*in the morning*," to mean, "*by the judgment of the law*, which was administered "in the *morning hours*." What straits is a system driven to, to require such an interpretation!

" ever) that he should still live for ever, and not " see corruption," &c. And again, speaking of the wicked, who think their houses shall continue for ever, and call the lands after their own names, he exclaims, " This their way is their " folly; yet their posterity approve their sayings: " like sheep they are laid in the grave; death " shall feed upon them, and the righteous shall " have dominion over them in the morning, and " their beauty shall consume in the grave from " their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul " from the power of the grave, for he shall re- " ceive me." Surely these expressions cannot be understood to denote any thing short of an *eternal deliverance* from the power of death, and a blessed reception into the presence of God.

I would here notice the remarkable verses in Psalm xxxvi.; where, speaking of those who put their trust in the Lord, the Psalmist declares, " They shall be abundantly satisfied " with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt " make them drink of the river of thy pleasures; " for with thee is the fountain of life: in thy " light shall we see light." Warburton, strongly as this passage appears to indicate *eternal life sustained* by *that presence* which is the *fountain of life*, dismisses it with this *short* and *decisive* observation: " Here, to prove the immortality " of man, a text is produced, which teaches the " eternity

"eternity of GOD. But I know some who think "there is a necessary connexion between these "two truths." It may perhaps be answered as shortly, that though there is no *general* necessary connexion between these two truths, yet if the Scripture asserts, not only that *God* is to *exist for ever*, but that man shall *witness* that eternal existence, *partaking* of that inexhaustible fountain of life which is with God; it is not *very far* from asserting that man himself will be also immortal.

The same sentiment observed in Psalm xlix. is more conspicuous in Psalm lxxiii. in which the author (whether David or Asaph* is not material in the present question, as they were cotemporary †, and equally prove that the sentiments which they express existed in the most pious and reflecting minds) chooses as his subject the worldly prosperity of the ungodly; the doubts and perplexities which this excited in his mind, as to the equal dealing of Divine Providence, until these doubts were dispelled by the lights which religion affords as to the final doom of the wicked, contrasted with the glory reserved for the good: "Then," says he, "thought I to know "this, but it was too painful for me; until I went "into

* Vide 1 Chron.

† If, as Patrick thinks, this Psalm was composed by *Asaph the Seer*, it will belong to the days of Hezekiah.

" into the sanctuary of God: then understood I " their end. Surely thou didst set them in slip- " pery places; thou castedst them down into de- " struction. How are they brought into desola- " tion, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed " with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh; " so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt " despise their image." Such was the fate of the wicked; which going into the sanctuary, where religious reflections naturally suggested themselves, enabled him to apprcciate in its true colours, and to contrast it with that blessing the pious author hoped himself to enjoy: " Nevertheless, I am " always with thee: thou hast holden me by my " right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy " counsel, and afterward receive me to glory *." How plain and strong the hope of eternal life, here expressed.

But

* I adopt here our Bible translation, as the most clear and accurate. Nothing seems more plain and decisive in asserting a future retribution. But Warburton dismisses this also, with his usual majestic brevity: " Thou shalt guide me with thy " counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory; or, as an ex- " cellent critic has it, 'Consilio tuo deduxisti me, et postea " cum gloria excepisti me,' Thou wast, or *shalt* be always " present with me in difficulties and distresses; and shalt " lead and conduct me to better fortunes. This literal sense " the context requires." With great deference to this great critic (who was Le Clerc) I cannot help thinking that this, though adopted in *some* versions, is not the true literal sense; and

But the inspired author, enraptured at the thought, dwells on and exults in it: "Whom have "I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon "earth

and that the context requires the direct contrary. How is it possible that the Psalmist should, in ver. 12—14, declare, That while the wicked increased in riches he should think his own innocency was in vain; because "all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning:" and without *intimating* that any sudden *change* in his own external situation had done away this difficulty, he declares that entering into the sanctuary had solved it; religion taught him a truer judgment. Was this merely to expect better fortunes in this life? A most poor and unworthy lesson for so sublime an instructress. But as I would also wish to shelter myself under critical authority, I would refer to the Rabbi David Kimchi; who on ver. 17. remarks, "That the Psalmist entering into the "sanctuary, implies his entering by his reflections into that "world of spirits, where is retribution, where the just are to be "discriminated from the impious; and I there understood "that we were formed to a celestial more than an earthly life." And Taylor, "Then understood I their (Ahharith) their fu- "ture state after death: Surely thou hast set them in slippery "places, thou hast cast them down into eternal destruction. "And ver. 20: As a dream after one is awake, so, O Lord, "when thou awakest, (בעיר in awaking them, or when they "are awakened) thou wilt despise (debase, pour contempt, as "Dan. xii. 2.) upon their image, their vain, shadowy, unsub- "stantial condition." Vide Taylor, p. 103.—The 24th verse Hammond (whom Warburton so highly approves as an excellent critic and an orthodox divine, Div. Leg. Vol. iv. p. 153.) explains, "*afterwards receive me to glory, that is to thyself.*" Vide also Calmet, Patrick, and Horne, Poli Synopsis, and Dodd's Notes.

,' earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and " my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my " heart, and my portion for ever."

Nor is Psalm ciii. less expressive of feelings, which no prospect of mere temporal blessings could excite; which impel the divine Psalmist to exclaim, " Praise the Lord, O my soul; and all that is " within me praise his holy name. Praise the " Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." These benefits then the Psalmist with a sublime fervor of gratitude enumerates; but he dwells chiefly on such topics as an elevated soul anxiously looking forward to another life would most naturally select. He glances at temporal blessings, but he enlarges on the spiritual mercy of God *. " The Lord," says he, " is full of com- " passion and mercy, long-suffering, and of great " goodness; he will not always be chiding; neither " keepeth he his anger for ever. He hath not " dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us " according

* The 4th verse, " Who redeemeth thy life from destruction," is in the original, " Who redeemeth thy life from *the pit*." And the Chaldee renders it, " Who redeemeth it from Gehenna." The Syriac and Arabic, " *From corruption.*" The 5th verse, " Thy youth is renewed like the eagle's," is by the Chaldee paraphrased, " *In the future world thou shalt renew thy youth like the eagle.*" But I rely on the general turn and spirit of the entire context, not on isolated and perhaps ambiguous expressions. All the versions agree as to the literal meaning of the verses quoted in the text.

" according to our wickednesses. For look how
" high the heaven is in comparison of the earth;
" so great is his mercy also towards them that
" fear him. Look how wide also the east is
" from the west; so far hath he set our sins
" from us."

This passage could scarcely have been dictated by any hope of mere temporal and momentary forgiveness; it is irreconcilable with the feelings of a mind which looked forward to annihilation and eternal death as the irreversible doom decreed against the sin of the first man, and still to be executed without any relaxation of its severity on all the human race. But to put this beyond all doubt, the Psalmist proceeds to contrast the divine mercy, with the transitory and wretched life of man, when that mercy does not interpose: " Yea," says he, " like as a father pitieth his own
" children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them
" that fear him. For he knoweth whereof we are
" made; he remembereth that we are but dust.
" The days of man are but as grass; he flourisheth
" as a flower of the field; for as soon as the wind
" goeth over it, it is gone, and the place thereof
" shall know it no more. But the merciful good-
" ness of the Lord endureth for ever and ever
" upon them that fear him, and his righteousness
" upon their childrens children; even upon such
" as keep his covenant, and think upon his com-

" mandments to do them." But it has been said, the expression of *righteousness upon childrens children* shews the Psalmist had in his view nothing more than the continued protection of the posterity of the good in this world, according to the promise of the second commandment*. The very next verse refutes the degrading suggestion, and shews the views of the Psalmist were raised to a higher world: " The Lord," says he, " hath " prepared his seat in heaven; and his kingdom " ruleth over all. O praise the Lord, ye angels " of his, ye that excel in strength, ye that fulfil his " commandments, and hearken unto the voice of " his word. O praise the Lord, all ye his hosts; " ye servants of his that do his pleasure. O speak " good of the Lord, all ye works of his, in all places " of his dominion: praise thou the Lord, O my " soul." Can we doubt whether the soul which breathed forth praises such as these, did not look forward to the society of those angels, whom it calls even now to join with one voice and one consent, to celebrate the universal goodness of their common God. These angels are combined with the servants of God, " that do his pleasure;" an expression exactly parallel to that of the Apostle,

* Vide Warburton, Vol. v. p. 156. This is the only expression of the Psalm which Warburton considers; thus entirely overlooking the tenour and context of the composition. Any system may be supported by such a mode of criticism.

Apostle, when he says, "Ye are come to an heavenly "Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of "angels, to the general assembly of the first-born "of the church, which are written in heaven, and "to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just "men made perfect *." Assuredly the mind of the holy Psalmist was exalted by the same ideas, and animated by the same hopes.

In Psalm cxv. after declaring the privilege of God's people over the idolatrous world, "That their God was in heaven, and did whatsoever he pleased," but that the idols of the heathen "were silver and gold, the work of mens hands," dead, senseless and impotent; and that "they who make them shall be like unto them, and all they that put their trust in them;" that is, they shall become dead and senseless as their idols, without any hopes of a renovation or restitution to a state of happiness; he proceeds to contrast this with the hopes and the blessings that awaited the people of God; which he plainly intimates will not be confined to the enjoyments of this transitory life, but extend to a future and eternal state: "You are "the blessed of the Lord, who made heaven and "earth. The heaven, even the heavens are the "Lord's; but the earth hath he given to the chil-"dren of men. The dead praise not the Lord, "neither

* Heb. xii. 22, 23.

" neither any that go down into silence. But we
" will bless the Lord from this time forth for
" evermore." On which a judicious and learned Critic observes *, " What can be the meaning of
" the opposition here put between God's people
" and the dead; and the one's not praising
" Jehovah, the other praising him for ever?
" Could the Psalmist possibly mean their living
" to praise him upon earth? The earth, he had
" told us just before, was given to all the sons of
" Adam; and the Gentiles lived upon it as long
" as the Jews, for any thing that appears to the
" contrary. Could he mean that they should never
" undergo the state of death? But this too could
" not be, for they died as naturally and as soon
" perhaps as the heathens, and their posterity
" must do the same, though it extended itself to
" a thousand generations. What then is that dis-
" criminating blessing here intended, that should
" distinguish the worshippers of Jehovah, all those
" who feared the Lord, both small and great,
" from the idol worshippers and contemners of
" Jehovah. I freely own I can make no sense of
" this passage, otherwise than by understanding
" the word *dead* of the heathen nations, who
" having no part in God's covenant of redemp-
" tion, but being estranged from him by their
" idolatries and wickedness, were to be left for
" ever

* Peters on Job, p. 223 to 226.

" ever in a *state of death*, so as never more to " *rise*, to *happiness at least*; while God's people, " on the other hand, hoped for a joyful resurrec- " tion, and a future state of blessedness, wherein " they should praise God for ever, in the most " extensive sense of that expression. There is " nothing forced," continues the learned critic, " that I can perceive, in this explication, taking " with us the notion (so well established by a very " learned Prelate *) that God's covenant made or " rather renewed with Abraham and the Patri- " archs, implied in it a conquest over death, and " a removal of that curse denounced on Adam at " the Fall; and this notion stands confirmed by " our Saviour's reasoning in the Gospel, where " he exempts Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from " amongst the *dead*, by virtue of God's covenant " with them *to be their God*; and from thence, as " from an unanswerable argument, proves a fu- " ture resurrection."

I close this series of proofs—that a future state was almost perpetually in the contemplation of the holy Psalmist—with Psalm cxxxix. in which with such a divine penetration as nothing but an heaven-taught wisdom could inspire, he celebrates the all-seeing omniscience of his God, whom he describes as " about his path and abou " his bed, and spying out all his ways; acquainted " with

* Sherlock on Prophecy, Disc. V, particularly p. 112.

"with every word in his tongue long before." When he describes that Omnipresent Spirit, which fills the expanse of heaven, and penetrates to the recesses of hell, from whom no darkness can conceal, because the darkness is no darkness with him, but the night is as clear as the day; when he acknowledges that creative love by which he was fearfully and wonderfully made; when he exclaims, "How dear are thy counsels unto me, "O God! yea, how great is the sum of them! "If I tell them, they are more in number than "the sand: when I awake up, I am present with "thee;" what is the practical inference which the holy Psalmist deduces? It is nothing less than the destruction of the wicked, and the eternal happiness of the good, in which he expresses a firm confidence that he himself will share: "Wilt thou "not slay the wicked, O God? Depart from me, "ye blood-thirsty men." And thus he concludes: "Try me, O God, and search the ground of my "heart; prove me, and examine my thoughts. "Look well if there be any way of wickedness in "me; and lead me in the way everlasting *."

In

* All the versions agree in translating the last words of this Psalm, "*the way everlasting.*" Indeed the original will scarcely bear any other meaning; and it is opposed to the way of *pain or grief*," (as we have it in the margin of our Bibles) which would make the sense still more expressly to indicate the eternal rewards of a future life, as opposed to its punishments.

Yet

In the moral works of SOLOMON we find sufficient proofs that he was certain of a future state of retribution, and felt its importance as the strongest sanction of virtue. The book of Proverbs, consisting chiefly of rules of prudence for the direction of human conduct, so as to obtain prosperity in the present life, does not so frequently afford occasion for directly enforcing the doctrine of a future state; but in many places it is plainly intimated, and in some directly asserted.

When in chap. iv. the preacher exhorts "Enter "not into the paths of the wicked, and go not "into the way of evil men;" he enforces this admonition by declaring, "the path of the just is "as the shining light, that shineth more and more "unto the perfect day; but the way of the wicked "is

Yet I know not why, except from not observing this antithesis, and being led away by the translation of the first clause, as a *way of iniquity;* many of the best commentators have interpreted the second as the *way of piety and righteousness,* which alone is durable and eternal. But the word עצב originally meaning "grief and pain," seems to be by a metaphor, only applied to idols and idolaters, as bringing misery on their worshippers; while עולם "eternity," is very seldom used in such a metaphorical sense. I cannot see why the more literal meaning of both should not be here preserved, and the sense would be, *Look well if there be any way deserving of pain or punishment in me, and lead me in the way of eternity.*

" is as darkness, they know not at what they " stumble*." Words beautifully expressing the reward of virtue, increasing from day to day, until it terminates in endless glory; and the terrors of conscience, which incessantly disturb the guilty.

In chap. viii. after celebrating the praises of Wisdom, which the Lord possessed in the beginning of his way, before his works of old, even from everlasting, she is introduced solemnly calling on all the sons of men: " Now therefore " hearken unto me, O ye children; for blessed " are they that keep my ways. For whoso find- " eth me, findeth *life*, and shall obtain favour of " the Lord. But he that sinneth against me " wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me " love *death*." These words can scarcely signify any thing less than the destruction brought upon the soul by *death eternal*. But this is still more clearly asserted to be the punishment of yielding to the seductions of the adultress and the harlot; whose house the royal Preacher describes as " the " way to hell, going down to the chambers of " death." And again, when she saith to the dupe of

* Prov. iv. 18, 19. This passage is not noticed by Warburton. There is no difference of interpretation as to the words quoted, and many of the most reputable commentators give them the same sense as I do here; as Mercerus, Glassius, Baynus, Patrick, Dodd. Vide Poli Synopsis, &c.

of her vice. "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread "eaten in secret is pleasant;" the Preacher adds, "But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and "that her guests are in the depth of hell." While in chap. xii. 28, we are told, "In the way of "righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof "there is *no death*." Thus again, in chap. xiv. we are assured that "The fear of the Lord is a "fountain of life, to depart from the snares of "death." And still more expressly we are assured, that "The wicked is driven away in his "wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in "his death*." And the contrary fate of the wicked is expressed with equal clearness, in ch. xxi. 16: "The man that wandereth out of "the way of understanding, shall remain in the "congregation of the dead," that is, (as Patrick explains it) "shall be sent down to hell, confined to the company of the old giants, who, giving themselves up to violence and debauchery, were swept away by the Deluge." And by a similar sanction doth

* Prov. xiv. 32. "Hath hope in his death," i. e. says Warburton, "the righteous hath hope, that he shall be de-"livered *from* the most imminent dangers. So the Psalmist, "upon them that hope in his mercy, to deliver their soul "from death, and to keep them alive in famine." But to me no ideas seem more different than having *hope in* death, and hope to escape *from* death; except *in* and *from* are taken as synonymous and convertible prepositions, which they certainly are not in Hebrew more than in English.

doth the royal Preacher enforce his beautiful exhortation to active benevolence, chap. xxiv. 11: "If thou forbear to deliver them that are "drawn unto death, and ready to be slain; if "thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not: doth not "he that pondereth the heart, consider it? and "he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? "and shall not he render to every man according "to his works?" And immediately after, "When "thou hast found wisdom, there shall be a reward, "and thy expectation shall not be cut off*."

But if the doctrine of a future retribution is only *incidentally* mentioned in the book of Proverbs, it forms the *great basis* and the leading truth of the book of Ecclesiastes. In this the royal Preacher expatiates on the transitory condition of mankind, if considered as confined to the present state of existence; the vanity and vexation of spirit attending all present human enjoyment,

* Warburton interprets Prov. xi. 7, "When a wicked "man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of "unjust men perisheth," combined with the verse now quoted, to apply merely to the expectation of wicked men, to establish a *house* in *their posterity*; which expectation would deceive them; and to the expectation of wise and virtuous men in the success of their honest endeavours, which should not deceive them. Now to me it seems the former passage must imply a much more serious disappointment, the latter a much higher reward. But other passages already quoted appear sufficiently clear. Vide Warburton, Vol. v. 157.

ment, which his own experience had so abundantly proved; the apparent inequality of Providence, except under the Jewish dispensation, by which there appears one event to the righteous and the wicked. "This," says he, "is an evil among "all things that are done under the sun, that there "is one event unto all; yea, also the heart of the "sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in "their heart while they live, and after that they "go down to the dead*." But in all the difficulties and perplexities, all that vanity and vexation of spirit, which this partial view of human nature implies, the royal Preacher brings forward the prospect of a future life and just retribution, as the solution and the remedy, the consolation and the cure†. In chap. iii. he tells us, "I know "that

* Eccles. ix. 3.

† The ingenious and learned Desvoeux, in his Dissertation, Comment and Paraphrase on the Book of Ecclesiastes, has so clearly proved the scope of it to have been the enforcement of a future life, that I need only refer to his Work. He also points out the misinterpretations of Warburton. Vide his Dissertation, ch. ii. sect. iii. particularly p. 72, compared with Warburton, Vol. iv. p. 158.—Those who have not Desvoeux's Work, may be pleased to see his view of this very important part of Scripture. "The author's design," says he, "is to prove the immortality of the soul, or rather the "necessity of another state after this life, from such argu- "ments as may be afforded by reason and experience; and "his whole discourse may be reduced to three propositions, "every

" that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever:
" nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken
" from

" every one of which, when properly reflected upon, yields
" a strong proof of a future state of rewards and punish-
" ments. First, No labour or trouble of men in this world
" can ever be so profitable as to produce in them a lasting
" contentment and thorough satisfaction of mind. Secondly,
" Earthly goods, and whatever we can acquire by our
" utmost trouble and labour in this world, are so far from
" making us lastingly happy, that they may be even looked
" on as real obstacles to our ease, quiet, and tranquillity.
" Thirdly, Men know not what is or is not truly advantageous
" to them; because they are either ignorant or unmindful of
" that which must come to pass after they are dead: there-
" fore any one may conclude, that there must be a state of
" true and solid happiness for men; except God, who is al-
" lowed to have made them what they are, to have implanted
" in their hearts that strong desire of happiness which often
" makes them unhappy in this world, and to have the abso-
" lute command of their fate, be absurdly supposed to have
" acted whimsically in their formation, and to act so still in
" the dispensation of providence. Thus from all these propo-
" sitions, but especially the last, the Preacher infers, that we
" must seek for happiness beyond the grave." This scheme the learned author supports, by an accurate Analysis of the entire work. Vide his Dissertation, chap. iii. Vide also Patrick's Preface, which, as to my present argument, is equally conclusive; and Poli Synopsis. Should it be objected, that this system supposes an unequal providence in Solomon's reign, contrary to the declaration of the Mosaic Law, I answer, no such inference can be drawn. Solomon had, in consequence of his father's fidelity and his own early piety, enjoyed the highest temporal prosperity; this had

corrupted

"from it: and God doeth it, that men should "fear before him." Having thus asserted the uniformity and consistency of the divine conduct, he contrasts them with the perversion of right by human guilt; and declares this can only be rectified by the righteous judgment of God: "And "moreover, I saw under the sun the place of "judgment, that wickedness was there; and the "place of righteousness, that iniquity was there. "I said in mine heart, God shall judge the "righteous and the wicked; for there is a time "there for every purpose, and for every work."

In chap. viii. ver. 11, he remarks, "Because "sentence against an evil work is not executed "speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men "is fully set in them to do evil." He adds, "Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and "his

corrupted his mind, seduced him into vice, and involved him in disappointment and calamity, which were the present consequences and punishment of his offences. But this whole series of events operated not only to convince him, that God had punished his own abuse of temporal prosperity; but that all such prosperity was in its own nature inadequate to the aspirings of an immortal spirit, which ought to seek its happiness in the rewards of another life, to be secured only by the constant fear of God and obedience to his laws. Besides, we cannot but suppose that Solomon's views were enlarged, to consider the general state, conduct, and prospects of mankind, even beyond the precincts of the Jewish state, and the sanctions of the Jewish Law.

" his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it " shall be well with them that fear God, which " fear before him: But it shall not be well with " the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, " which are as a shadow; because he feareth not " before God." Evidently denoting, that present impunity, during the longest life, is as a shadow only, compared with that future duration through which the punishment of the wicked shall extend. And in chap. xi. is this remarkable passage; " Re- " joice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy " heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and " walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight " of thine eyes: but know, that for all these " things God will bring thee into judgment." And finally, to prove a future state of retribution was the object he held out, through the entire of his exhortation, as the only adequate sanction of virtue, the only sure prop of religion; and eternal happiness the only rational object of human pursuit; he closes this admirable work with a solemn admonition: " Remember now thy Creator in " the days of thy youth, while the evil days come " not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt " say, I have no pleasure in them." Then, after describing, with singular beauty and philosophic precision, the symptoms of decay preceding that awful hour, when, as he expresses it, " The dust " shall return to the earth as it was, and the

"spirit shall return unto God who gave it;" he imprints upon the heart of his reader, that great truth, which it was his chief object to promulgate and enforce: "Let us hear the conclusion of the "whole matter: Fear God, and keep his com- "mandments: for this is the whole duty of man. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, "with every secret thing, whether it be good, or "whether it be evil*."

The great truth of a day of divine judgment and strict retribution, was thus clearly promulgated by the royal Preacher, whose distinguished glory as a monarch, and unparalleled wisdom as a sage, must have excited the greatest attention to his instructions, amongst all his countrymen. But it seems to have been the intention of Providence to impress the conviction that the soul survived death, and that man was capable of a blessed immortality, by miraculous facts as well as by inspired instructions. This must have been the effect of those three great instances of resurrection from the dead, produced by the miraculous power of Elijah and Elisha, the most illustrious of the Jewish Prophets: first, the son of the widow of Zarephath, whom Elijah revived immediately after he had expired †; secondly, the son of the Shunamite, whom Elisha restored to life, after

* Ecclesiastes, two last verses. † 1 Kings xvii.

after he had been dead for a considerable length of time, even during the journey of his mother from Shunem to Carmel, to implore the Prophet's aid, and their return *; and lastly, the resurrection of the man who was bearing to his burial, and who, on being let down into the sepulchre of Elijah, revived †. Each of these facts rose above the preceding, both in the public notoriety of the event, and the magnitude of the miraculous interposition. In addition to these facts, the glorious translation of Elijah to heaven, so sublimely described by the sacred historian, when "there ap-"peared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and "parted them both (that is, Elijah and Elisha) "asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind "into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel "and the horses of Israel. And he saw him no "more ‡." These miracles, combined with others of a different kind wrought by the same Prophets, which must have excited general attention, could not fail of impressing extensively and deeply on the Jewish nation, the opinions of the soul's surviving death, and being capable of a blessed immortality. And in the writings of the subsequent Prophets we find these truths introduced sometimes in metaphor and scenic description

* 2 Kings iv. † Ibid. xiii. 21.
‡ Ibid. ii. 11, 12.

tion as familiar to the minds of the Jewish people, and sometimes directly revealed and authoritatively enforced, to support the interests of virtue and the sacredness of religion.

I select a few instances from the energetic and sublime Isaiah. How awful the description of the destruction which was to await the king of Babylon; which, though a scenic and metaphorical description, could not but suggest the idea and impress the belief of a future state; or rather indeed proves such ideas and such a conviction were perfectly familiar both to the Prophet and his readers: "Hell from beneath is moved for "thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up "the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the "earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all "the kings of the nations. All they shall speak, "and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak "as we are? art thou become like unto us*?" In chap. xxv. the Prophet describes the faithfulness of God in executing his menaces on the wicked, and his promises of salvation to the faithful, in terms which in their full meaning are applicable only to the great day of final retribution, however they may in a more confined sense have been fulfilled by antecedent and temporal judgments: "O Lord," says the Prophet, "thou art "my

* Isaiah xiv. 9 & 10.

" my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy " name: for thou hast done wonderful things; " thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." And then, after describing the vengeance of God on his enemies, he proceeds to describe the salvation of the faithful: " And he will destroy in this " mountain the face of the covering cast over all " people, and the vail that is spread over all " nations. He will swallow up death in victory; " and the Lord God will wipe away tears from " off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall " be take away from off all the earth: for the " Lord hath spoken it *."

In

* In Lowth's beautiful translation, the idea of an immortal state is still more clearly expressed, ch. xxv. 8.

He shall utterly destroy death for ever;
And the Lord JEHOVAH shall wipe away the tear from off all faces.
And the reproach of his people shall be remove from off the whole earth;
For JEHOVAH hath spoken it.

And on verse 6, Lowth remarks, " The feast here spoken " of, is to be celebrated on Mount Sion, and all the people " without distinction are to be invited to it; this can be no " other than the celebration of the establishment of Christ's " kingdom, which is frequently represented in the Gospel, " under the image of a feast; where 'many shall come from " the east and west, and shall sit down at table with Abraham, " Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.' Matthew viii. 11. " Luke xiv. 16, and xxii. 29. This sense is fully confirmed by " the concomitants of this feast, expressed in the next verse, " the removing the vail from the face of all nations; and the " abolition

In chap. xxvi. the Prophet pursues the same subject, in terms which yet more directly suggest the resurrection at the last day: "In that day "shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: "We have a strong city; salvation will God ap- "point for walls and bulwarks. Thy dead men "shall live; with my dead body shall they arise. "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for "thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth "shall cast out the dead. Come, my people, "enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy "doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a "little moment, until the indignation be overpast. "For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place "to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their "iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, "and shall no more cover her slain *."

In

"abolition of death. The first of which is obviously and "clearly explained of the preaching of the Gospel. And the "second must mean the blessing of immortality procured for "us by Christ, who hath 'abolished death, and through death "hath destroyed him that had the power of death.'"

* Isaiah xxvi. 1, 19, 20, 21. Lowth's translation of these last verses is somewhat different, though, for the purpose I adduce them, not materially: ver. 10.

Thy dead shall live, my deceased they shall rise.
Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust;
For thy dew is as the dew of the dawn.
But the earth shall cast forth as an abortion, the deceased tyrants.

And

In chap. xxxiii. how awfully does the Prophet describe the judgments of God! "Hear ye that "are far off, what I have done; and ye that are "near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in "Zion

And ver. 21.

For behold, Jehovah issueth forth from his place,
To punish for his iniquity the inhabitant of the earth.
And the earth shall disclose the blood that is upon her,
And shall no longer cover her slain.

On this passage Lowth remarks, "The deliverance of the "people of God from a state of the lowest depression, is ex- "plained by images plainly taken from the resurrection of "the dead. In the same manner the Prophet Ezekiel repre- "sents the restoration of the Jewish nation from a state of "utter desolation, by the restoring of the dry bones to life, "exhibited to him in a vision, chap. xxxvii. which is directly "thus applied and explained, ver. 11; and this deliverance "is expressed with a manifest opposition to what is here said "above, ver. 14, of the great Lords and Tyrants under whom "they had groaned;

They are dead, they shall not live;
They are deceased tyrants, they shall not rise.

"That they should be destroyed utterly, and should never "be restored to their former power and glory. It appears "from hence, that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead "was at that time a common and popular doctrine; for an "image which is assumed, in order to express or represent "another in the way of allegory or metaphor, whether poetical "or prophetical, must be an image commonly known and "understood, otherwise it will not answer the purpose for "which it is assumed."

Here I find the Bishop of Killala makes no material change in Lowth's translation; but the learned Prelate in the next chapter

" Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the " hypocrites: who amongst us shall dwell with " the devouring fire? Who amongst us shall dwell " with everlasting burnings *? He that walketh " righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that " despiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh " his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth " his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his " eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: " his place of defence shall be the munitions of " rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters " shall

chapter notices a circumstance very apposite to my present argument: Ch. xxvii.

" In that day,
" Shall Jehovah punish with his grievous sword,
" His great and strong sword,
" Leviathan the mailed serpent,
" Even Leviathan the writhing serpent;
" And he shall slay the monster that is in the sea."

On this the Bishop remarks, " that whatever present adver- " sary is designed here, by the name of Leviathan, whether the " king of Egypt or Babylon; it seems highly probable that a " future spiritual enemy is in contemplation, even the old ser- " pent, whose final destiny is related, Rev. xx. 10."

*Lowth translates the 14th verse, " Who among us can " abide this consuming fire, who among us can abide these " continued burnings?" Ver. 11 to 22, Lowth remarks, is a description of the dreadful apprehensions of the wicked, in those times of distress and imminent danger, finely contrasted with the confidence and security of the righteous, and their trust in the promises of God, that he will be their never-failing strength and protector.

" shall be sure." And in verse 22, the ground of this confidence is emphatically described: " For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is " our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will " save us."

In chap. li. the Prophet illustrates the abolition of the Jewish economy and the introduction of the new, by images which bespeak a mind familiarized to the contemplation of that grand catastrophe which shall close the existence of this sublunary world: " Lift up your eyes to " the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; " for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, " and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and " they that dwell thereon shall die in like manner: " but my salvation shall be for ever, and my " righteousness shall not be abolished. Hearken " unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people " in whose heart is my Law; fear ye not the " reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their " revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like " a garment, and the worm shall eat them like " wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, " and my salvation from generation to genera- " tion*."

I close the extracts from this truly evangelic Prophet,

* Lowth's translation is here much more accurate and expressive: " But my righteousness shall endure for ever, " and my salvation to the age of ages."

Prophet, with chap. lvii. in which he describes, in terms the most clear and impressive, that strict retribution by which divine justice will correct all the inequalities of the present life, and render to every man according to his works: "The righ-
" teous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart;
" and merciful men are taken away, none con-
" sidering that the righteous is taken away from
" the evil to come *. He shall enter into peace:
" they shall rest in their beds, each one walking
" in his uprightness. For thus saith the high and
" lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name
" is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place,
" with him also that is of a contrite and humble
" spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to
" revive the heart of the contrite ones. But the
" wicked are like the troubled sea, whose waters
" cast

* Lowth is more accurate, and equally expressive of the sentiment which this passage appears to me to impress:

" The righteous man is taken away because of the evil;
" He shall go in peace, he shall rest in his bed,
" Even the perfect man, he that walketh in the straight
" path."

Bishop Stock remarks, that "in verse 19, the words, "Peace to the distant and to the near, saith Jehovah, means, "to the Gentiles as well as Jews. In this universal peace the "wicked shall have no share." I would add, this universal peace, excluding all the wicked, can scarcely be conceived strictly true but of that world "wherein shall dwell righteousness."

" cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith " my God, to the wicked."

Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the minor Prophets, occupied as they chiefly are, in denouncing the temporal judgments immediately to be inflicted on the Jews, first by the dispersion of the ten tribes, and afterwards by the Babylonish captivity, recur to the remote ideas of a future state less frequently than the great evangelic Prophet, who constantly extends his view to the glories and the effects of the Messiah's reign. Yet they frequently speak of Jehovah as recompensing all the inhabitants of the earth, whether nations or individuals, according to their deeds; and of the great and terrible day of the Lord; and of mens delivering their souls from death; in terms which are properly applicable only to the great day of final retribution. Thus Jeremiah, in chap. xvii. declares, " The heart is deceitful above all things; " who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, " I try the reins, even to give to every man ac- " cording to his ways, and according to the fruit " of his doings *." And again, " He that getteth " riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the " midst

* Blayney observes, the Prophet contrasts the accursed condition of him that resteth his trust on man, ver. 5. 8. He sheweth that, be the human heart ever so wily, God can detect, and will finally punish its double-dealing, ver. 9, 11. He acknowledgeth that sure salvation cometh from God, and from God only.

"midst of his days, and at his end shall be a "fool *." And again, "O Lord, the hope of "Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, "and they that depart from me shall be *written* "*in* the earth; because they have forsaken the "LORD, the fountain of living waters."

Thus Ezekiel, in the vision of the valley of dry bones, chap. xxxvii. gives a scenical representation of the restoration of the dead hope of Israel by the restoration of these bones to life: "Then said "he unto me, Son of man, these bones are the "whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our "bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are "cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy, and "say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Be- "hold, O my people, I will open your graves, "and cause you to come up out of your graves, "and bring you unto the land of Israel †." Thus also

* Blayney reads "felon," that is, "he shall have the re- "ward of a felon at last, or shall be brought to condign "punishment. This is directly opposite to what Balaam "wished, Numb. xxiii. 10, and what every wise man "would wish for himself, a latter end like that of the righte- "ous." If this observation is just, the Prophet, by the *last end* of the irreligious, means their future state; which according to Taylor, is the exact force of the word אחרית here used. The Chaldee paraphrase renders the words "shall be written in earth," by *falling into Gehenna.*

† Primate Newcome, in his note on the 12th verse of this chapter observes, "In the land of their captivity, the "Jews

also Hosea, encouraging Israel to obedience by the prospect of deliverance from the calamities which God would inflict on them for their crimes, if they should truly repent; in chap. xiii. calls on them: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; "but in me is thine help. *I will ransom them "from the power of the grave; I will redeem "them from death: O death, I will be thy plague! "O grave,

"Jews seemed as absolutely deprived of their own country, "as persons committed to the grave are cut off from the "living. The foregoing similitude shewed in a strong and "beautiful manner, that God, who could even raise the dead, "had power to restore them." Having been led to recur to the Works of this truly learned and Christian divine, I cannot forbear expressing the fond and grateful remembrance which must ever remain imprinted on my heart, of a man, whose encouragement animated, whose advice guided, my earliest studies; and in whose friendship (terminated alas! only by his death) I received the most honourable reward. But he is gone in peace, he rests in glory; though dead, his example and his works still speak to the living; and Oh, "may we die the death of the righteous, and may "our last end be like his."

* This verse is otherwise, and, as it seems to me, more accurately rendered by Primate Newcome:

"Yet I will redeem thee from the grave,
"I will deliver thee from death.
"O death, where is thine overthrow!
"O grave, where is thy destruction!
"Repenting is hidden from mine eyes.

"i.e." says Newcome, "change of purpose, my veracity "being concerned." And he remarks, that "St. Paul natu-

"rally

" O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance " shall be hid from mine eyes."

Joel, with all the energy and sublimity of Isaiah himself, predicts the wonderful effusion of divine grace under the Gospel scheme; and passes on to describe the signs that should precede, and the terrors that should attend, the coming of the day of judgment, that great and terrible day of the Lord: " And I will shew wonders in the heavens, " and in the earth, blood and fire, and pillars of " smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, " and the moon into blood, before the great and " the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall " come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the " name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in " Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, shall be deliver- " ance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant " whom the Lord shall call *."

Amos also first describes the temporal sanctions of the Mosaic Law, and their exact distribution by

" rally applies to the resurrection of the dead, what the Pro- " phet says of future national happiness." Admitting the Prophet means only this, we have here a very strong instance how distinct and familiar was the idea of a resurrection to the Prophet and his countrymen.

* Joel ii. 30. Primate Newcome understands this passage, of the events which took place at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. But from our Saviour's language, Matt. xxiv. 29, we are certainly warranted in applying them also to the day of general judgment.

by the immediate hand of God, who "caused it "to rain upon one city, and not to rain upon an- "other city; one piece was rained upon, and the "piece whereupon it rained not withered. So "two or three cities wandered unto one city to "drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet "have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. "I have overthrown some of you, as God over- "threw Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a "firebrand plucked out of the burning; yet have "ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord*." He then proceeds to point out that great day of judgment, the prospect of which ought to restrain, as its punishment would assuredly chastise, the obstinacy of their guilt: "Therefore thus will I "do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do "this unto thee, PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD, "O ISRAEL. For lo, he that formeth the moun- "tains, and createth the wind, and declareth "unto man what is his thought, that maketh "the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the "high places of the earth, The LORD God of "hosts is his name."

Nahum with equal sublimity describes the vengeance of God in terms applicable only to the general judgment on all the inhabitants of the earth: "He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it "dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan lan- "guisheth,

* Amos iv. 7, 8, & 11.

" guisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon
" languisheth. The mountains quake at him, and
" the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his pre-
" sence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.
" Who can stand before his indignation? and
" who can abide in the fierceness of his anger?
" His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks
" are thrown down by him. The Lord is good,
" a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he
" knoweth them that trust in him. But with
" an overrunning flood he will make an utter end
" of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue
" his enemies*."

Finally, I close this series of prophetical denunciations of the great day of final retribution, with the distinct and awful description of it by the Prophet Daniel.

" I beheld," says the Prophet, " till the thrones
" were cast down, and the Ancient of days did
" sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the
" hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne
" was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burn-
" ing fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth
" from before him; thousand thousands ministered
" unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand
" stood before him: the judgment was set, and
" the books were opened." And again, " I saw
" in the night visions, and behold, one like the
" Son

* Nahum i. 4—8.

"Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, "and came to the Ancient of days, and they "brought him near before him. And there was "given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, "that all people, nations, and languages should "serve him: his dominion is an everlasting domi- "nion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom "that which shall not be abolished *."

And at the conclusion of this wonderful and solemn prophecy, in the last chapter of Daniel, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the "great prince which standeth for the children of "thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, "such as was never since there was a nation, even "to that time: and at that time thy people shall "be delivered, every one that shall be found "written in the book. And many of them that "sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some "to everlasting life, and some to shame and "everlasting contempt. And they that be wise "shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; "and they that turn many to righteousness as the "stars for ever and ever †."

Thus clearly do the Jewish Prophets promulgate that truth, so plainly declared by another inspired writer, who probably did not live under the Jewish dispensation, and who, at a much earlier period, proclaimed the same awful doctrine,

* Dan. vii. 9, 10. & 13, 14 † Ibid. xii. 1—3.

trine, even the Patriarch Job, who, with all the solemnity which its importance required, demands for it the attention of mankind, when he exclaims *, "O that my words were now writ-"ten, that they were printed in a book! that they "were

* Job xix. 23—27. That this passage of Job really means the redemption of the just at the last day, has been abundantly proved by many writers, in opposition not only to Warburton, but to Grotius and Le Clerc. Vide particularly the notes of the very learned Schultens, and of Peters. The ancient origin of the book has also, as appears to me, been abundantly proved by many writers, but by none more ably than by my learned friend Dr. Magee, in his work on Atonement and Sacrifice. I think it unnecessary to dwell longer on this subject, the argument on which has already swelled far beyond my original intention. I would only remark, that notwithstanding his laboured dissertation, Warburton appears to have entertained some doubt, as to the validity of the proofs he had given of the modern date of this book. Since if this was certain, it was *unnecessary* for him to maintain, that this passage was to be understood only of a future *temporal* deliverance of the Jews. For nothing could justify such a forced interpretation, but the supposition that the author lived at a period when the idea of a future life had never been entertained (if such a period can be assigned.) If on the contrary Job was written about the close of the Babylonish Captivity, as Warburton contends, it is quite certain, and even admitted by himself, that the ideas of a future life and retribution were then familiar to the Jews; and there would remain no possible reason for suspecting they were not familiar to and plainly expressed by the supposed author of the book of Job.

" were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the
" rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer
" liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day
" upon the earth. And *though* after my skin
" *worms** destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall
" I see

* Our translation introduces the word " worms" in this verse unnecessarily; it may be more closely and clearly translated, " And that even I, after my skin is consumed, shall " in my flesh behold my God." This is Houbigant's version, with which Schultens and Peters nearly agree.

I have been much gratified at finding that a very learned writer confirms the exposition I had given * of the expressions used by the Jewish lawgiver, in the history of the Creation, when he declared that God said, " Let us make man in " our own image, after our likeness: and let him have domi- " nion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, " and over the cattle, and over all the earth." After clearly proving that this *image* included reason, which qualified man for that dominion with which he was vested, he proceeds to observe:. " But now the substance in which the faculty of " reason resides, could not be a material substance, as the " best philosophy evinceth †. Man, therefore, must needs " consist of an immaterial substance, joined to a material; " or, in other words, he must be a compound of soul and " body. And this seems to be intimated, and not obscurely " neither, by the words of the text: ' The Lord God formed " MAN of the DUST OF THE GROUND, and breathed into his " nostrils THE BREATH OF LIFE, and man became A LIVING " SOUL.' By the words *the breath of life*, and *a living soul*, " which discriminate LIFE in man from LIFE in brutes, we

" are

* Vide supra, p. 195. † Alluding to Clarke, and Baxter.

" I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and " mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though " my reins be consumed within me."

We

" are not to understand immateriality simply; since all ani- " mals, as we say, have this in common; but the CONTINU- " ANCE of LIFE after the separation of the compound, in " virtue of man's *rationality;* which making him responsible " for his actions, may, according to the different parts in God's " moral œconomy, require *that* separate *existence.*"

The learned author afterward remarks, that " the place, " which points out this difference, is made to serve for an in- " troduction to the history of the *free gift of immortality.* " And a better cannot be conceived than that which teacheth " us, that the subject on whom this gift was bestowed, is, by " the immateriality of his physical nature, capable of enjoying " it; and, by the freedom of his reasonable nature, account- " able for the abuse of it. So much is observed in honour of " that exquisite knowledge with which the sacred Writer was " endowed." The reader will perhaps be surprised as much as I was, at discovering that the learned writer now quoted is no other than WARBURTON HIMSELF; the identical Warburton who had so strenuously maintained that *in all the writings of Moses* not so much as an *intelligible hint of a future state* was to be found. The passage now quoted occurs in the ninth book* of the Divine Legation, written many years after the first six, and which though printed, so far as it goes, by the author, was left unfinished, and not published until after his death. It is however not unfair to conclude, that *hints of a future state* which were *unintelligible* to him, while he saw only through the medium of his own system, became

* Vide Vol. iii. pp. 620 & 621 of Warburton's Works, in seven volumes 4to. printed 1788.

We have now traced the gradual promulgation of the great doctrine of a future retribution, from the first gracious intimation of final deliverance from

became intelligible (as they must, I think, be to all others) when that mist was gradually removed. But while I make this remark, I am fully conscious of the possibility that variations and inconsistencies may be found in my own pages; though I sincerely hope truth is the great object of my pursuit. I therefore impute not to Warburton any deliberate neglect of that sacred principle; I would rather claim for him as well as for myself, the old privilege of authors—

"Opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum."

I have not judged it necessary in this argument to notice particularly the different texts which Warburton brings to shew, "That his conclusion may be proved, not only from the "silence of the sacred writers, but from their positive declarations; in which they plainly discover, that there was no "popular expectation of a future state or a resurrection *." If the numerous passages alleged in this Work to prove the *contrary*, are fairly interpreted, these positive declarations shewing the expectation of a future state, cannot be done away by any texts from the same authors, which speak of death as the period of existence, or the grave as the land of forgetfulness, &c. &c.; for these all may be obviously and easily interpreted as meaning no more than that death closes our *present* state of existence, puts an end to our *present* projects, prevents us from declaring in the *present* world the faithfulness of God, &c. &c.; or at the utmost, that so long as the state of death continues, until men are raised from the dead and called to judgment, they remain *insensible* †, an opinion

* Vide Div. Leg. Book v. sect. v. Vol. iv. p. 353.

† Vide the Appendix to Bishop Law's Theory of Religion.

from the power of Satan, vouchsafed at the Fall, to its full disclosure by David and Solomon, and its solemn enforcement and impressive description by the last Prophets. And we are thus, I trust, fully prepared to receive and admit the clear truth and full force of our divine Lord's declaration,

opinion held by many *Christians*. And in some instances these texts seem to be opinions which the sacred writers suppose pronounced by irreligious or atheistical objectors, and which they afterwards expressly refute; or vehement exclamations of recent sorrow reducing the mind almost to despair. It is worthy of remark, that the Sadducees * alleged the same texts to prove the same conclusion, yet our Lord charges them with *not knowing the Scriptures*; an assertion which surely should warn us against arguing from the Scriptures in the same manner which they did. Nor is the declaration of St. Paul less express, as to what he conceived to be the real tenour of the Law and the Prophets on this subject; "This (says he to Felix) I confess unto thee, that after the "way which they call heresy, worship I the God of my "fathers; believing all things which are written in the Law "and the Prophets: and have hope towards God, which they "themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection "of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein "do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of "offence both toward God and toward men." Acts xxiv. 14—16.

* Vide Menasse Ben Israel, as quoted by the learned David Humphreys, in his Essay on the Notions of the Jews concerning the Resurrection, p. 89; in which the texts adduced by the Sadducees are quoted and considered.

declaration, that the Jews derived the knowledge of this truth from the Scriptures of the Old Testament; when appealing to them for the prophetic attestation of his own divine mission, he calls on his hearers, "Search the Scriptures; "for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and "they are they which testify of me*." And though the disquisition which this inquiry has produced, has swelled to an unexpected length, I trust this will be excused, from its obvious tendency to vindicate the truth and illustrate the connexion of both revelations.

* John v. 39.

PART III.

LECTURE V.

SECT. I.

EFFECTS OF JUDAISM ON THE GENTILES.

LECTURE V.

SECT. I.—*Objection to Judaism, first from its being confined to a single nation—Secondly, from its implying mutability in God, as being opposed to Christianity—Answer to the first—Judaism not confined in its effects to one nation, but intended, through the instrumentality of the Jews, to enlighten mankind—This effect foreseen and attended to in the Jewish scheme—Various instances to shew this—Solomon's prayer at the consecration of the temple establishes the same inference—The miracles wrought for the Jews made a strong impression on the Egyptians—On the Canaanites—On the Philistines—On the heathens in the reign of Solomon—But counteracted by the principles of idolatry—Instanced in the history of the Samaritans—Who were however prepared by Judaism for Christianity—Effects produced by Judaism on the heathens during the Captivity—Instanced in the history of Jeremiah—Of Daniel—Of his three friends—Of Belshazzar—Of Cyrus—These facts publicly attested—Importance of such attestations—Traces of these effects in the East—Traces of the same effects in the religion of Zoroaster—Of Mahomet—Recapitulation—Universal reformation not to be expected at that period of the world—Objection derived from partial effects of Judaism, erroneous in its statement of facts—Inconclusive in reasoning—A revelation not being universal, implies no injustice in God.*

PART III.

LECT. V.

SECT. I.

EFFECTS OF JUDAISM ON THE GENTILES.

EXODUS ix. 16.

"AND in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for "to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be "declared throughout all the earth."

IT yet remains to observe, that the Jewish system has been objected to, on grounds distinct from its immediate doctrines, or its direct effects upon the Jews themselves. First, as being *partial*; wholly confined to one obscure and insignificant nation, and therefore unworthy of a divine interposition, and inadequate to that stupendous apparatus of miracles by which it is supposed to have been introduced: Secondly, as indicating a capricious mutability on the part of God, who (as those objectors affirm) first promulgated the Mosaic Law as of eternal obligation; and yet afterwards is supposed

to

to have abrogated it, and introduced the different and even opposite system of Christianity.

To these objections it is answered, first, that the Jewish scheme was never intended merely for the benefit of the Jews alone, but by their instrumentality for the benefit of all mankind, whose instruction and reformation it had the clearest tendency to promote, by exhibiting the most striking proofs of the existence and power of the true God, not only to the Jews themselves, but to all the nations placed in their vicinity or affected by their fortunes; amongst whom were the Egyptians the wisest, the Canaanites the most warlike, and the Phœnicians the most commercial nations of remote antiquity; and afterwards the four great empires of Assyria and Persia, Greece and Rome, which successively swayed the sceptre of the civilized world. So that whatever knowledge of true religion was preserved amongst mankind, was in all probability principally derived from this source, or at least was from thence materially extended and improved *.

A still

* That the Jewish Constitution was adapted to attract the attention and improve the religious knowledge of mankind, from the particular time at which it was introduced, has been satisfactorily evinced by a late ingenious writer *.

He

* Mr. Cappe, Vol. ii. p. 208.

A still more decided proof, that the Jewish scheme was designed for and subservient to the general

He observes, "had it been erected at a period nearer to "the Deluge, whether during the time while the light from "the old world, shed upon the survivors of that catastrophe, "remained inextinguished, or during the darkness and bar- "barism that succeeded it, it does not seem that the period "would have been (at least to human judgment) so wisely "chosen. It would have been superfluous while men re- "mained under the deep and recent impressions of the "Deluge; and to the uninformed and inobservant minds of "their successors, who were sinking into barbarism, it would "have been lost, like a spectacle exhibited to the blind or "the careless: and even had its benefits been extended to all "mankind, the number would have been then (comparatively "at least) but few. But not being erected until men were "multiplied and divided into separate communities, some of "them grown up into some considerable magnitude, and to "some good degree of improvement in powers and know- "ledge, it had, for the effectual exhibition of God's moral "government, the advantage of being presented before "many and qualified observers capable of apprehending such "a truth, of being gratified, or at least struck, with an easy "proof and a conspicuous display of it. Beginning after "the commencement of such nations as Babylon, Syria, "Persia, and Egypt; continuing during the progress of "these nations through various conditions and vicissitudes, "and unavoidably having some connexion with them, be- "cause settled in the midst of them, and some share in the "changes which took place amongst them, the circumstances "of the Jewish nation, and their correspondence with its "character, and its observance and neglect of its peculiar "constitution, could not but be well known to those nations;

general benefit of mankind, is derived from that great feature of it which supplies the answer to the second objection; even this: That there has been no change in the divine purposes, and no inconsistency between the Jewish and Christian dispensations; but that the Mosaic Law was from the first intended not to be of eternal obligation, but declared to be subservient to and introductory of the Gospel.

In order to establish the tendency of the Jewish economy to promote amongst other nations the knowledge of the true God, it is important to remark, that to produce such a tendency is expressly pointed out as part of the divine plan, and as a motive frequently influencing the measures of the divine dispensations. Thus the Jewish Legislator represents God as declaring concerning Pharaoh, "In very deed for this cause "have I raised thee up, to shew in thee my "power; and that my name may be declared "throughout all the earth*." And when on the impious rebellion of the Jews, after the return of the twelve spies, God proposes to destroy this ungovernable

* Exod. ix. 16.

"it must have exhibited an experimental, obvious, and "clear proof of the moral government of God, a spectacle "attracting their attention through all the stages of civil "society, and all the different conditions incident to such "combinations of men."

ungovernable race, and raise from his faithful servant Moses a nation greater and mightier than they, the patriotic Legislator, in deprecating the execution of the divine menace, employs this topic as the most powerful dissuasive: "Now if thou "shalt kill this people as one man, then the nations "which have heard the fame of thee will speak, "saying, Because the Lord was not able to bring "this people unto the land which he sware unto "them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilder-"ness*." He then proceeds to entreat, that the long-suffering mercy of God may now be exercised: "And the Lord said, Behold I have par-"doned according to thy word; but as truly as I "live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory "of the Lord†." The awful sentence is then pronounced, that the nation shall continue forty years

* Numb. xiv. 15.

The same motive is represented as constantly operating to prevail upon Jehovah to withhold the full punishment in justice due to the crimes of this wayward people. Thus in his last solemn hymn, in which the Lawgiver exhibits a prophetic sketch of the entire dealing of God with his people; after enumerating the signal punishments which would follow their apostasies, he adds, Deut. xxxii. 26, 27, "I would "scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance "of them to cease from among men. Were it not that I "feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should "behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our "hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this."

† Numb. xiv. 20, 21.

years in that wilderness, until "all the men of that evil generation should perish there:" a sentence * the miraculous execution of which undoubtedly did, and still does, exhibit in the strongest light the power and justice of Jehovah to all the nations of the earth.

Thus again, when the Legislator labours to impress upon his countrymen the observance of the divine laws, he urges a similar motive; "Keep therefore and do them, for this is your "wisdom and your understanding in the sight of "the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, "and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and "understanding people. For what nation is there "so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as "the Lord our God is in all things that we call "upon him for? And what nation is there so "great, that hath statutes and judgments so "righteous, as all this Law which I set before you "this day †." And certainly the wonders of divine power wrought in behalf of the Jewish people, combined with the character of the Jewish Law, justify this appeal of the Jewish Legislator to all nations acquainted with these awful facts. And how extensively has the knowledge of these facts been disseminated, how perpetually

* Vide this Work, Vol. I. p. 138 to 143.

† Deut. iv. 6—8.

perpetually is it still spreading, through all the civilized regions of the globe.

Thus again, when the Legislator, with that spirit of prophecy which so strongly attests his divine mission, declares to his nation the prosperity which should reward their obedience, and the calamities which should chastise their transgressions, he states that both would be so signal as to attract the attention of the neighbouring countries, and evince to them the greatness of Jehovah: "The Lord shall establish thee an "holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn "unto thee, if thou wilt keep the commandments "of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways. "And all the people of the earth shall see that "thou art called by the name of the Lord: and "they shall be afraid of thee. But it shall come "to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice "of the Lord thy God, all these curses shall over-"take thee; and thou shalt become an astonish-"ment, a proverb, and a by-word among all "nations whither the Lord shall lead thee; so "that the generation to come of your children "that shall rise up after you, and the stranger "that shall come up from a far land, shall say, "when they see the plagues of that land, and the "sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it; "even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the "Lord done thus unto this land? what meaneth

" the heat of this great anger? Then men shall
" say, Because they have forsaken the covenant
" of the Lord God of their fathers, which he
" made with them when he brought them forth
" out of the land of Egypt; and the Lord rooted
" them out of their land in anger, and in wrath,
" and in great indignation, and cast them into
" another land, as it is this day*."

Assuredly, as this prediction was illustriously verified in the various fortunes of the Jewish nation under their judges and their kings, even to the total expulsion of the ten tribes, the signal captivity of the remaining two, and their as signal restoration; so it is still more illustriously verified by the present unparalleled dispersion of the Jews, and their equally unparalleled preservation as a distinct people, notwithstanding that dispersion†. Assuredly they at this day exhibit the most irrefutable proof of an overruling Providence, and of the divine original of those Scriptures which contain the laws they were bound to observe, and predict the calamities which should chastise the breach of that sacred obligation.

In

* Deut. xxviii. 9. 10. 15. 37.; also xxix. 22. 24. 25. 28.

† On this subject consult Newton on the Prophecies, Dissertation vi. vii. viii.; and Lardner's Three Discourses to prove the circumstances of the Jewish People an argument for the truth of the Christian Religion, in his ten volume, p. 63 & seq.

In the devout and beautiful prayer of Solomon, on the consecration of the Temple, we find the principle here stated, publicly and solemnly recognised: "Moreover, concerning a stranger that "is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a "far country for thy name's sake; (for they shall "hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, "and of thy stretched-out arm) when he shall come "and pray towards this place; hear thou in hea-"ven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all "that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all "people of the earth may know thy name, to fear "thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may "know that this house which I have builded, is "called by thy name*." And again, at the conclusion of this devout address, the monarch prays, "Let these my words, wherewith I have made "supplication before the Lord, be nigh unto the "Lord our God day and night, that he may "maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause "of his people Israel, as the matter shall require: "that all the people of the earth may know that "the Lord is God, and that there is none else†."

In this remarkable passage, which is the more decisive as it contains a solemn recognition of the principles and objects of the Jewish Law, proceeding from the highest human authority, and sanctioned

* 1 Kings viii. 41—43. † Ib. 59, 60.

sanctioned by the immediate approbation of God, whose glory filled the house of the Lord during this solemn supplication, we perceive it is clearly laid down, not only that the Jewish scheme was adapted and designed to make "all the people of the earth know that the Lord was God, and that there was none else;" but also that the stranger from the remotest region, who should be led to believe in and to worship the true God, was not only permitted, but called and encouraged to "pray towards the temple at Jerusalem," to join in the devotions of the chosen people of God, and equally with them hope for the divine favour, and the acceptance of his prayers; without becoming a citizen of the Jewish state, or submitting to the yoke of the Mosaic ritual or civil Law *. For the words of Solomon evidently suppose, that the stranger whom he describes as thus supplicating God, remained as he had originally been, "not of the people of Israel."

How

* From 2 Chron. ii. 17, it appears Solomon found in Israel strangers of such a rank of life as were fit to be employed in assisting to build the Temple, 153,600. These (as the commentators agree, vide Poli Synopsin, and Patrick, &c.) were proselytes to the worship of the true God, and the observance of the moral law, though not circumcised. Patrick observes, "These were the reliques (as Kimchi thinks) of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, mentioned afterwards, ch. viii. 7. But they were "not

How far the decided superiority of Jehovah over the idols of Egypt and Canaan *, and the clear manifestation of divine justice, mercy and power, so conspicuously exhibited by the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt, and their settlement in the promised land, were effectual in diffusing the knowledge of the true God, it is perhaps impossible accurately to ascertain; that they did not produce any extended permanent national reformation in any idolatrous country is certain. Indeed to produce such an effect at that period of the world, it seems evident, nothing but such a system of perpetual discipline and control as God exercised over his chosen people, would have been sufficient.

The Scripture history however supplies various instances of the deep impression made on the minds of those, who were perfectly apprised of the miraculous interpositions of God in behalf of his

* Vide supra, Lect. II. p. 80—90.

"not idolaters, for then David would not have suffered "them to dwell in the land. But they worshipped God alone, "though they did not embrace the Jewish religion wholly, "by being circumcised. These David had numbered, that "he might know their strength and their condition; which "did not proceed from such vanity as moved him to number "his own people; but out of a prudent care that they "might be distinguished from Jews, and be employed in "such work as he did not think fit to put upon the Israelites." See 1 Chron. xxii. 2.

his chosen people. In reciting the plagues of Egypt, we are told, that the magicians, when their own power was clearly exceeded and their arts baffled, acknowledged, "This is the finger of God*:" and when Moses warned the Egyptians of the approaching plague of a very grievous hail, we find, "He that feared the word of the Lord, "among the servants of Pharaoh, made his ser- "vants and his cattle flee into the houses†." On the increasing accumulation of plagues, inflicted in consequence of the impious obduracy of Pharaoh, his servants at length ventured to remonstrate with that proud and inflexible monarch: they said unto him, "How long shall this man "(Moses) be a snare unto us? Let the men go, "that they may serve the Lord their God: "knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed‡?" And we are told, that "the man Moses was very "great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pha- "raoh's servants, and in the sight of the people§." Nor can a more probable account be given of that "mixed multitude‖" who accompanied the children of Israel out of Egypt, than that it consisted of Egyptians, deeply convinced, by the miracles they had witnessed, of the supreme divinity of Jehovah, and thence determined to adhere to his worship, and for that purpose join themselves

* Exod. viii. 19. † Ibid. ix. 20. ‡ Ibid. x. 7.
§ Ibid. xi. 3. ‖ Ibid. xii. 38.

themselves to his chosen people, share the same fortune, and submit to the same Law *.

On the approach of the Jews to the land of Canaan, we perceive the terror of their God had gone before them: "Verily," (says Rahab to the spies) "I know that the Lord hath given you the "land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and "that all the inhabitants of the land faint be-"cause of you. For we have heard how the Lord "dried up the waters of the Red Sea for you, "when you came out of Egypt; and what you "did unto the two kings of the Amorites that "were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, "whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as "we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, "neither did there remain any more courage in "any man, because of you; for the Lord your "God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth "beneath †." The similar avowal of the Gibeonites is equally express and strong: "From a "very far country thy servants are come, because "of the name of the Lord thy God: for we have "heard the fame of him, and all that he did in "Egypt, and all that he did to the two kings of "the Amorites that were beyond Jordan. There-"fore

* Vide Patrick in locum, and Selden de Synedriis, lib. i. ch. iii. p. 776, Vol. I. Tom. II.

† Joshua ii. 9—11.

"fore now make ye a league with us *." Their apology for the artifice they had practised is not less striking: "Because," say they, "it was cer-"tainly told thy servants, how that the Lord thy "God commanded his servant Moses to give "you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabi-"tants of the land from before you; therefore we "were sore afraid of our lives because of you, "and therefore we did this thing †."

It cannot be doubted but the Gibeonites being permitted to preserve their lives and property, on condition of becoming "hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord," must have renounced idolatry; for the attendance of avowed idolaters at the altar for any purpose, would have been an intolerable profanation. Had the other nations of Canaan imitated their conduct in submitting to the chosen people and renouncing idolatry, they most probably would also have experienced mercy‡. But relying on the protection of their idols, they encountered the host of Jehovah, and their destruction served to increase and to diffuse the terror of his power §, a terror, the impression of which we trace three hundred years after, when the

* Josh. ix. 9—11. † Ib. ver. 24.
‡ Vide supra, Lect. I. particularly pp. 5. 15, &c.
§ Vide supra, p. 84.

the Philistines, hearing that the ark of God had been brought into the camp of Israel, exclaimed, "Woe unto us: who shall deliver us out of the "hand of these mighty gods? these are the gods "that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in "the wilderness*." On this occasion, God, by permitting the Israelites to be defeated and his ark taken, punished their presumption in relying on his protection without repenting of their crimes. While on the idol of the Philistines† and his worshippers, he inflicted such signal chastisement‡, without any intervention of human agency, as seems admirably adapted not only to punish but to reform their idolatry; yet in vain: at that period the human mind appears incapable of being thus reformed. The deluded Philistines acknowledged the resistless power of Jehovah; but they were thence stimulated merely to remove

* 1 Sam. iv. 8.

† On this subject Warburton judiciously observes,—"After this transaction we hear no more of any attempts "among the Gentile nations to join the Jewish worship "with their own. They considered the God of Israel as a "tutelary Deity, absolutely unsociable, who would have "nothing to do with any but his own people, or with such "particulars as would worship him alone, and therefore in "this respect different from all other tutelary gods, each of "which was willing to live in community with the rest."—Vide Div. Leg.

‡ 1 Sam. ch. v. & vi.

move the immediate pressure of that power from their idols and themselves. They never once felt the reasonableness of forsaking such base absurdities, and adhering steadily to the worship of the God of Israel.

In the reign of Solomon, the tendency of the Jewish scheme to diffuse the knowledge of the true God appears increasingly conspicuous. The prosperity and wealth of this monarch, the magnificence of his temple, and, above all, his fame for wisdom, attracted universal attention; for "his fame was in all nations round about, and "there came of all people to hear the wisdom "of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth, "which had heard of his wisdom*." We have observed the solemn and public manner in which he encouraged the stranger who was not of the people of Israel, to worship the God of Israel. And it is probable many strangers may have been at this period attracted to rank themselves with the worshippers of the true God. Still, however, the human mind appears not to have been prepared for any general and permanent reception of that pure religion, which, acknowledging "God to be a spirit," declares "he must be worshipped in spirit and in truth†." And when we see that Solomon himself, with all his advantages, did not resist

* 1 Kings iv. 29 to 34. and x. 1 to 13.

† Gospel of St. John, iv. 23, 24.

resist the seductions of idolatry, we cannot wonder if no considerable portion of those who may have been attracted by his fame and attentive to his instructions, could permanently emancipate themselves from its fascinating power.

We have indeed abundant proofs how deeply rooted was the opinion of the world's being governed by an indefinite number of local and national guardian gods, rivals in power and influence; no one of whom however absolutely excluded the worship of the rest. So that it was believed to be the interest and the duty of each nation, to adore and conciliate the gods of every country they conquered or settled in; retaining at the same time with undiminished reverence the idols of their own ancestors, as their peculiar guardian deities. While this was a principle universally admitted, no display of power and majesty on the part of the God of the Jews, could produce any other effect than an abortive and absurd attempt to associate the worship of Jehovah with that of those base idols which a deluded world adored*; an attempt which the dignity of the true God must necessarily resent and punish.

A most

* Consult, on this principle of intercommunity in the Pagan religions, Warburton, Book ii. sect. vi. Vol. ii. p. 33. And this being the principle on which the Samaritans originally adopted the worship of Jehovah, (ib. p. 50) whil-

A most remarkable instance of the truth of this observation occurs, in the conduct of the colony planted by the king of Babylon in Samaria, to supply the place of the ten tribes whom he had carried into captivity. Their history casts so much light on the subject now under discussion, that I conceive it necessary to transcribe it in a note, as we find it related with all the characters of truth by the sacred historian *.

And

in every case the condemnation of this principle by the Jewish religion, and its allowing only the worship of Jehovah, prevented its being received by the heathens.—Vide Warburton, Book v. sect. ii. Vol. iv. p. 203. See also Ezekiel xvi. 34.

* The 2nd of Kings, xvii. 24, &c. "And the king of "Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, "and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, "and placed them in the cities of Samaria, instead of the "children of Israel; and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt "in the cities thereof. And so it was at the beginning of "their dwelling there, that they feared not the Lord; there- "fore the Lord sent lions amongst them, which slew some "of them. Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, "saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed "in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God "of the land; therefore he hath sent lions among them, "and behold, they slay them, because they know not the "manner of the God of the land. Then the king of "Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the "priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them go "and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner "of

And I observe, that this history affords an instance of heathens, placed probably in the most advantageous

" of the God of the land. Then one of the priests, whom " they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt " in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the " Lord. Howbeit, every nation made gods of their " own, and put them in the houses of the high places which " the Samaritans had made. And the men of Babylon " made Succoth-Benoth, and the men of Hamath made " Ashima, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and " the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and " Anammelech the gods of Sepharvaim. So they feared " the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them " priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the " houses of the high places. They feared the Lord, and " served their own gods, after the manner of the nations " whom they carried away from thence. Unto this day " they do after their former manners: they fear not the " Lord, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the Law and commandment which the " Lord commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named " Israel; with whom the Lord had made a covenant, and " charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor " bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to " them: but the Lord, who brought you up out of the land " of Egypt with great power and a stretched-out arm, him " shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall " ye do sacrifice. And the statutes, and the ordinances, and " the Law, and the commandment which he wrote for you, " ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear " other gods. And the covenant that I have made with you, " ye shall not forget; neither shall ye fear other gods. But " the

advantageous situation it was possible for heathens to be placed, in order to reclaim them from idolatry; introduced to supply the place of one part of God's chosen people who had been expelled for their idolatries; thus brought into immediate contact with the remaining part, from whom they could not but learn much of the wonders of Jehovah's power; convinced by their own experience, of the necessity of conciliating him as the supreme guardian God of the country in which they were newly settled, and compelled by their fears to solicit instruction in his Law. They receive that instruction; the books of Moses are placed in their hands, and were from that period uniformly acknowledged by them as of divine authority*. Yet so deeply were their idolatrous propensities rooted in their souls, that though thus circumstanced, with examples of divine punishment immediately under their observance, instructed in the tenour, and acknowledging the authority of the divine Law, they could not be taught to discern the folly and impiety, or forsake the

* Vide supra, Vol. I. p. 14.

"the Lord your God ye shall fear; and he shall deliver you "out of the hand of all your enemies. Howbeit, they did "not hearken, but they did after their former manner. So "these nations feared the Lord, and served their graven "images, both their children and their childrens children: "as did their fathers, so do they unto this day."

the practice, of associating the worship of the basest idols with that of the great JEHOVAH. They indeed "feared the Lord, (but yet) they "served their graven images, both their children "and their childrens children: as did their "fathers, so do they unto this day."

But though it does not appear, that the Samaritans could at *that period* be completely reclaimed from idolatry, yet the measures employed to enlighten them with the knowledge of the true God seem gradually to have produced a considerable effect. On the return of the Jews from the seventy years captivity, an event which so clearly proved the inspiration of the Jewish Prophets, and the overruling providence of the God of Israel, the Samaritans were extremely desirous to join in rebuilding his temple, and celebrating his worship: for "they said unto the chief of the "fathers, Let us build with you: for we seek "your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice to "him, since the days of Esarhaddon king of "Assyria, who brought us up hither*."

This proposal the Jews steadily rejected; and whatever their motives may have been, we can discern important reasons, in consequence of which this rejection appears to have been subservient to the purposes of the divine economy. The intermixture of the Samaritans with the Jews

* Ezra iv. 2.

Jews might have rendered the accomplishment of the prophecies concerning the family and birth of the Messiah, less clear; might have re-introduced idolatry among the restored Jews, now completely abhorrent from it, and in various ways defeated the grand objects of Providence in selecting and preserving a peculiar people. In consequence of this rejection and the alienation it produced, the Jews probably became more vigilant in preserving the strictness, and the Samaritans more zealous in emulating the purity, of the Mosaic ritual. They became hostile, and therefore unsuspected guardians and vouchers of the integrity of the sacred text, particularly of the Pentateuch. And while the Jews, in general, blinded by their national prejudices, could see in the promised Messiah only a national and temporal deliverer, the Samaritans appear to have judged of his pretensions with more justice and success *. And though our Lord

* Vide John iv. particularly ver. 41 & 42. "And many "more (of the Samaritans) believed, because of his own "word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not "because of thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves, "and know that this is indeed the Christ, the SAVIOUR OF "THE WORLD." A confession of faith higher by some degrees (as Dr. Lightfoot remarks) than the Jews common creed concerning the Messiah; for they held him only for a Saviour of the Jewish nation. And so we may see how deeply and cordially these Samaritans had drank in the waters

Lord visited them only as it were incidentally *, yet he was able to declare to them his character and avow his dignity, without that mysterious reserve and jealous caution which the proneness of the Jewish multitude "to take him by force and make him a king †," constantly required. And it seems evident that the Samaritans were predisposed and prepared to receive and diffuse the light of the Gospel, more than any other description of men, the pious and reflecting part of the Jewish nation only excepted. And thus this circumstance in the progress of the Jewish dispensation, which at first view might seem to prove it was peculiarly partial and confined, appears in its final result to have materially facilitated the diffusion of true religion

waters of life, so as to acknowledge Christ in his proper character. Vide also the testimonies of St. Chrysostom and Epiphanius to the same effect, as quoted by Kennicot, Dissertation, Vol. II. p. 41 to 47. The expression of the woman, "When the Messias cometh he will *tell us all things*," shews that she expected him in *his* proper character of a *religious instructor*."

* Vide John ch. iv. particularly ver. 26 and 42, on our Lord's reasons for reserve and caution, in avowing his divine character and full dignity, and for his sometimes concealing his miracles. Consult Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity. Watson's Tracts, Vol. iv. p. 22 to 39; and why he is thus distinct in his avowal of his being the Messiah to the Samaritans, ib. p. 30.

† John vi. 15.

religion in the world, and thus to have been subservient to the general advantage of mankind.

But it was during the captivity of the Jews, and their consequent dispersion amongst the inhabitants of the most illustrious empire in the civilized world, that God principally employed them as the means of exciting the attention of the heathen to his majesty and his providence. The prophetic denunciations of Jeremiah as to this subjugation and captivity, were so public and decided as to attract the notice of the Assyrian army and their mighty monarch; so that when Jerusalem was taken, Nebuchadnezzar gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan, captain of his guard, saying, "Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm." The reason of this peculiar regard is thus stated: "For Nebuzara-"dan said unto Jeremiah, The Lord thy God "hath pronounced all this evil against this place: "now the Lord hath brought it to pass, and done "according as he hath said; because ye have "sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed "his voice, therefore this thing is come upon "you*."

Thus the captivity of Judah glorified God amongst the heathen, even at its commencement. But during its continuance God employed various means to convince the Gentiles of his universal providence

* Vide Jer. xxxix. 12. and xl. 2.

providence and his resistless power. He raised up Daniel *, whose prophetic spirit exalted him to the highest distinction, for Nebuchadnezzar "made him ruler over the whole province of "Babylon, and chief of the governors over all "the wise men of Babylon." Darius the Mede retained him in the same dignity, from the same cause. Thus also God rescued the three illustrious friends of Daniel from the burning fiery furnace, into which they had been plunged as martyrs for the worship of Jehovah, in opposition to the profanations of idolatry. He preserved Daniel himself from the den of lions, to which he was condemned for the same glorious cause; and punished the proud impiety of Nebuchadnezzar, by a seven years insanity and degradation from his throne, to which he was restored, only when with his reason his piety returned, and he submitted to pay solemn and public homage to the God of Israel. Thus also at the moment when Belshazzar was insulting Jehovah, by bringing forth the consecrated vessels of his temple to be polluted by his profanation, the miraculous handwriting on the wall dashed with horror his impious revelling, and announced his own impending destruction, and the downfall of his empire.

These were not obscure or doubtful transactions, related only by deluded fanatics or artful impostors,

* Vide Daniel ii. iii. iv. v. vi.

impostors, but attested by the authentic decrees of the most distinguished monarchs, solemnly proclaimed through their wide-extended dominions. What writer would have dared, if unsupported by truth, to have asserted when the facts were recent, the promulgation of such decrees as these? "I king Nebuchadnezzar make "a decree, That every people, nation, and lan-"guage, which speak any thing amiss against the "God of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, "shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be "made a dunghill: because there is no other "god that can deliver after this sort*." And again, on his restoration from insanity he issues this proclamation: "Nebuchadnezzar the king, "unto all people, nations, and languages, that "dwell on all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto "you. I thought it good to shew the signs and "the wonders which the high God hath wrought "towards me. How great are his signs! and "how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is "an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion from "generation to generation†." Then follows the narrative of his vision, its interpretation by Daniel, and its accomplishment; all which appropriate the king's acknowledgments of the Divinity to Jehovah the God of Daniel, of whom the monarch thus concludes: "Now I Nebuchad-

"nezzar

* Dan. iii. 29. † Dan. iv. 1.

"nezzar praise, and extol, and honour the King "of heaven; all whose works are truth, and his "ways judgment: and those that walk in pride "he is able to abase *." Thus again the miraculous deliverance of Daniel from the lion's den, extorted from Darius this solemn and public homage to the God of Israel; "Then king "Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and lan- "guages, that dwell in all the earth, Peace be "multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That "in every dominion of my kingdom, men tremble "and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is "the living God, and stedfast for ever. He de- "livereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs "and wonders in heaven and earth, who hath "delivered Daniel from the power of the lions †."

And to crown this series of miraculous interpositions on one hand, and public homage to the majesty of Jehovah on the other, from the most distinguished monarchs of the Eastern world; the great Cyrus, founder of the Persian empire, was so fully persuaded of that divine Providence, whose Spirit dictated the prophecies so clearly pointing out the progress, nay the particular mode of his successes, that he became the active assistant in the restoration of the chosen people to their country. For in the first year of his reign he

* Dan. iv. 37. † Ibid. vi 25—27.

he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, saying, "All the kingdoms of the earth hath "the Lord God of heaven given me; and he "hath charged me to build him an house in "Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there "among you of all his people? the Lord God be "with him, and let him go up*."

These public and solemn testimonies to the majesty of the God of Israel must have contributed materially to check error and idolatry, in a country where the form of the government rendered the examples and the opinions of the monarchs so powerful and operative. They must have gained the Jews, even in their captive and degraded state, much consideration and attention; and as such a state led them to take pride in their religious superiority, the only superiority now left them, and to exalt the divine original and wisdom of their religion; so these events must have given their representations weight and credibility.

It is scarcely possible for us at this remote period, and in this distant region, till lately very ignorant of, and still but imperfectly acquainted with, the history and literature of the East, to estimate the full effect of the divine interpositions, by the Jewish system, from the calling of Abraham to the close of the Babylonish captivity, in checking the progress of error and idolatry, and diffusing

* Ezra i. 2 & 3.

diffusing the knowledge of the divine existence and the divine dispensations, in this primeval seat and source of civilization and philosophy.

One remarkable instance however of the diffusion of the principles of true religion, by the instrumentality of the patriarchal and the Jewish revelations, occurs in the history of the Magian religion, or that of the ancient Persians, which is venerable both for its antiquity and purity, as well as important from the number of its professors; and which, if we may credit the most learned and industrious writers *, appears to have been originally derived from the instructions of Abraham, and to have received its great reformation by Zoroaster from the communication of that religious knowledge which the Jews in their captivity disseminated through the East.

We have strong testimony to prove that the Persians had corrupted that purity of faith which they had received from their pious ancestor Elam the son of Shem, by the errors and superstitions of

* Consult Hyde's Religio Veterum Persarum; The Religion of the Persees, by Henry Lord; Prideaux's Connection, Vol. i. from p. 299 to 331; Universal History, Vol. ii. Book i. ch. xi. sect. iii. p. 69; Pocockii Specimen Historiæ Arabicæ, ex Abulfaragio, p. 54; Maurice's History of Hindostan, Vol. ii. Book iv. ch. iii. from 275 to 322; Höttinger's Historia Persarum, p. 172.

of the Zabian idolatry *; but that, probably, instructed by the Patriarch Abraham †, they had thoroughly reformed their religion and restored its purity. In process of time that purity was again corrupted, if not by gross idolatry, in worshipping the heavenly bodies and the elements of nature, particularly fire ‡, yet certainly by paying them an excessive and superstitious reverence; and above all, by admitting the doctrine of two independent principles of evil and of good, so hostile to the glory and the worship of the one great Jehovah, the universal Lord and King. From these corruptions this religion was again purified by the celebrated Zoroaster, who is represented, by those writers who seem best informed in Oriental literature, to have been cotemporary

* Hyde, ch. i.

† Hyde Relig. Persarum, ch. ii. & iii. passim, particularly p. 36. "To return," says Hyde, "to the ancient Persians, "by their declaration in the book called *Pharhang Sururi*, "the religion of the Persians is termed the religion of "Abraham and Zerdusht, or *Abrahamo Zerdushtensis*; for "they maintain, that Abraham was of the same religion "with Zerdusht, who succeeded him long after, and that "the religion of Zerdusht was derived from Abraham: and "by the religion of Abraham the Persians understand that "which (rejecting the first interpolation of the Sabians) "teaches the worship of the one only and true God, ex-"cluding all false religions," &c.

‡ Hyde, cap. iv.

porary with Daniel *, and if not a Jew, yet perfectly acquainted with the Jewish Scriptures, to which

* Prideaux, Vol. i. p. 301; Hyde, cap. xxii. p. 298, and cap. xxiv. de Vita Zoroastris; and Maurice's History of Indostan, Vol. ii. p. 280.

Warburton, with his usual humility of opinion and urbanity of manner, calls all those who believed the fact of such a reformation in the Magian religion, as I have here ventured to suppose, "*bewildered men* *," and considers the Zoroaster of Hyde and Prideaux as a mere imaginary personage, the production of modern Arabian fictions. However, notwithstanding the probability of my being numbered amongst those *bewildered unfortunates*, I cannot help assenting to the testimonies collected by Hyde, who could read and understand the original sacred writings of the Persians, and study the original Arabian histories, which Warburton certainly could not; and who appears to have spent a great part of his life in the investigation of this subject, with great patience, learning and sagacity. He expresses himself in the following manner † :

"The ancient prophet of the Persians, Zerdusht, or Ze-
"radusht (by the Grecians erroneously termed Zoroaster)
"wrote several books on different subjects, as we have
"proved in the proper place; all written in a language
"ancient, and in most places now obsolete. These remain
"as sealed-up treasures, which the eyes of the learned have
"never examined. These works in manuscript (*isti codices*)
"are still extant, preserved by the followers of that religion
"with the greatest care; a circumstance which may scarcely
"be credited by such as are strangers to these things, and
"who do not even dream that the old Persians have always
"had

* Warburton, Vol. iv. p. 180. † Vide his Preface, p. 4 & 5.

which the distinguishing features of the reformation by him introduced were in a great measure conformable.

" had a well-regulated church *, which preserved its " ancient memorials, and that it flourished in splendour to " Yesdegherd, (the last of that name) who reigned about " 1000 years ago; and that it has continued from that time " to this, though with less splendour. These books of Zoro- " aster are almost strangers in Europe (unless perhaps they " lie somewhere unknown;) but some of them, relating to " theology (that I may not *appear* to have made *these asser-* " *tions without evidence*) are *in my possession*, written in an " ancient language and character. I procured them from " the East by great labour and expense, and they are indeed " precious as gold. The autographs by Zoroaster were all " written in the ancient pure and unmixed Persic, as being " that which at that period was in use (without mixture of " Arabic) in those parts of Chorasan or Bactria, where was " the tribe of Gushtasp, and which still is used there. And " in the same manner most copies are written in the same " language, excepting some for the common use of moderns, " which have sometimes Median and Arabic words inter- " mixed, all which signify *the book*, by which name the Per- " sian Mahometans or Medo-Persians sometimes emphati- " cally designate the Koran.

" It were to be wished, that all the works of Zoroaster " were drawn out of the darkness of the Magians, and " brought

* Vide Hyde, cap. i.; in which he adduces arguments to prove, that the ancient religion of the Persians had retained the worship of God from the earliest ages to the present day, though intermingled with some superstitious observances, which the Greeks and Mahometans, misunderstanding and misinterpreting, had falsely charged with direct idolatry.—On the constitution of the Persian church, consult Hyde, cap. xxviii.

conformable. Hence his condemnation of two independent principles *, and his assertion, that the

* Pocockii Specimen Historiæ Arab. p. 147; Hyde Relig. Persar. cap. ix. 162, and cap. xxii. p. 293.

"brought to light amongst us; from which undoubtedly "many things which are now unknown to the European "world, would be discovered, to the advantage of the learned "and inquisitive. It is therefore incumbent on the patrons "of letters to provide in time for the expense attending this "object; such a work would be worthy of some prince or "illustrious person. Nothing can be effected without the "necessary expense being defrayed, which would not how-"ever require a great sum.

"Zoroaster, (as we have pointed out in cap. xxiv.) "from his conversation with the captive Jews in Persia, "was well acquainted with the Old Testament, and many "rites were from thence introduced by him amongst the "Persians; as appears as well from his history of the "creation *, and other things agreeing with Judaism, as "from having inserted (as Gjannabius attests) many passages "of David's writings into his books, his having uttered pro-"phecies concerning the Messiah, foretold and revealed, "though with some obscurity, in the Old Testament. But "it was besides necessary that himself should have been "favoured with a clearer and more peculiar revelation, and "have left that written in his books for the Magi, who were "to be led by a star to Christ, when born in Judæa; since "otherwise they could not have known that, nor would they "have

* Hyde, cap. ix on the Creation, cap. x. on the Deluge, and on the subject of the Magi, cap. xxxi.

the Supreme God was the universal creator of both good and evil, according to the doctrine of the

" have come to Judæa from a distant land. For these stran-
" gers understood this matter better than the inhabitants of
" Bethlehem, or the king, or all the Jews, who were at once
" instructed and alarmed by this evangelic information of
" the Magi. All which circumstances persuade us, that
" Zoroaster had a really divine revelation in this particular;
" especially as we know that God sometimes (as to his wis-
" dom it seemed good) has deigned to reveal truth to false
" prophets."

I think it unnecessary to transcribe any further. On this last argument of Hyde I would observe, that if Zoroaster was acquainted with the prophetic writings, and communicated to his countrymen the certain expectation of a Messiah, which he had from thence derived, " in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed," it is altogether unnecessary to suppose that he was favoured with any additional revelation; though we must admit that the Magi who visited our Saviour must have had an immediate revelation, to enable them to understand the meaning and follow the guidance of that supernatural appearance which conducted them to his presence. But the fact of the visit of the Magi, which otherwise seems unconnected with the other parts of the Scripture history, and difficult to account for, is so naturally explained by the supposition, that Providence had extended to the Persians the knowledge of the prophetic writings, and in connexion with that dispensation which had selected their nation, out of which to raise for his chosen people a temporal deliverer from the Babylonish Captivity, and a restorer of that temple where the Messiah was to appear, had (*as it were in return*) provided means for

the sublime Isaiah, which the Prophet introduces in such a manner as to prove it was particularly designed to rouse the attention of the *Eastern nations*, and especially the *Persians*, to this important truth; since he connects it with the solemn prophetic designation of the great Cyrus, as pre-ordained to be God's anointed: for "thus "saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose "right hand I have holden to subdue nations "before him; and I will loose the loins of kings; "to open before him the two-leaved gates, and "the gates shall not be shut: I will go before "thee, and make the crooked places straight: "I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and "cut in sunder the bars of iron: and I will give "thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches "of

for preparing them to receive the first tidings of that great spiritual Deliverer, who was to admit them and all nations into the church of God. This supposition appears to me to explain so clearly the visit of the Magi, and to combine this otherwise isolated fact with the entire series of the divine dispensations so harmoniously, that I confess it gives (in my judgment) additional credibility to the fact, that this knowledge of the prophecies respecting the Messiah had been communicated to the Persians, either through Zoroaster or some other medium; and induces me more readily to acquiesce in the testimony establishing this fact, which at the same time appears in its own nature, and independent of any such coincidence, sufficiently clear and unexceptionable.

" of secret places, that thou mayest know that I " the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the " God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, " and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee " by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though " thou hast not known me. Thou art my shep- " herd, and shalt perform all my pleasure: even " saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and " to the Temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. " I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is " no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou " hast not known me: that they may know from " the rising of the sun, and from the west, that " there is none beside me; I am the Lord, and " there is none else. I form the light, and create " darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I " the Lord do all these things *."

This radical principle of true religion Zoroaster inculcates clearly and strongly, accompanied with such additional circumstances, as prove, that while he wished to indulge the prejudices of the nation whom he taught, he yet was anxious to do so no further than might be consistent with the principles of the Jewish religion, from which his own were plainly borrowed. In this spirit he maintained, that *under* the SUPREME BEING was the angel of light, the director of good, and an angel of

* Isaiah xlv. 1, &c. and xliv. 28.

of darkness, the author of evil*: that between these is a perpetual struggle, which will continue until the end of the world, when there shall be a general resurrection and retribution to all according to their deeds; when the angel of evil and his followers shall in perpetual darkness suffer the punishment they deserve, while the angel of light and his followers shall be received into everlasting bliss; after which there shall be no more any mixture of evil and good, of light and darkness, but they shall remain separated to all eternity. He also taught that the Supreme God originally created the good angel alone, and that the evil followed by the defect of good.

In this entire system we perceive a constant effort to admit the distinct principles of evil and of good, acknowledged by the Magian superstition, but only in such a manner as was consistent with the Jewish doctrines, of the supremacy of Jehovah, the introduction of sin and death by the Fall, and the expectation of a resurrection and final judgment; which last doctrine was (as we have shewn) distinctly and energetically taught by the Jewish Prophets.

In other subordinate particulars of Zoroaster's scheme we find a conformity to that of Moses, so close

* Shaaristani Relig. Persarum, ch. xxii; Hyde, ch. ix. p. 163, and ch. xxii. p. 299; Pocockii Hist. Arab. p. 148; and Lord, Of the Religion of the Persees, cap. ii.

close as cannot be accounted for, except on the supposition of a deliberate imitation *. Thus, as Moses heard God speaking from the midst of the fire †, Zoroaster pretended to the same; as the Jews had their glory or special presence of God resting on the mercy-seat, towards which they offered up all their prayers, so Zoroaster taught the Magians to hold the sacred fires in their temples as emblems of the divine presence; as the Jews had frequently received fire from heaven to consume their sacrifices, Zoroaster pretended to the same; as the Jewish priests were of one tribe, so were those of Zoroaster; as the former were chiefly supported by tithes and offerings, so were the latter. Even many of the Levitical distinctions between things clean and unclean are preserved in the religious code of Zoroaster. We also trace in the same work, the history of Adam and Eve, of the Creation, and the Deluge. We find insertions from the Psalms of David, and praises of the wisdom of Solomon. And above all, he celebrates Abraham; his doctrines and religion he delivers as the doctrines and religion of Abraham: so that his innovations had for their object to bring back the Magian religion to the purity which it had originally derived from the instructions of that illustrious Patriarch.

On

* This is clearly established by Hyde, cap. x. & xxii.

† Vide Lord's Relig. of the Persees, cap. viii. p. 42.

On the extent of this religion it is sufficient to say, that in the time of Lucian *, that is, soon after the promulgation of the Gospel, it was received by the great majority of the Persians, the Parthians, the Bactrians, the Chowaresmians, the Arians, the Sacans, the Medes, and many other eastern nations: and to this day no inconsiderable body of these Magians still remain in Persia and India, who observe the same religion which Zoroaster taught; who perform their public religious worship in his language †, and according to his rites; and preserve his book with the highest reverence, as the sole rule both of faith and manners.

It is a remark connected with the subject of the last observation, that whatever principles of true religion were adopted and preserved by *Mahomet*, he most certainly borrowed them from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament: the worship of one God; the abhorrence of idolatry; the expectation of a future retribution, and the rules of moral conduct, so far as that expectation is undebased by the sensual pleasures promised by the Arabian impostor, and so far as these rules are uncorrupted by the sensual indulgencies he permitted. In a word, every thing praiseworthy in

* Vide Lucian de Longævis, Sect. iv. Vol. iii. p. 210, Editio Hemsterhusii.

† Prideaux, Vol. i. p. 300.

in his system, is plainly derived from the Law and the Gospel. "Remember," says Mahomet, "when the Lord tried Abraham by certain words, "God said, Verily I will constitute thee a model "of religion unto mankind *." Then follows a divine selection of Mecca for a holy house; a prayer of Abraham, that God would send an Apostle to teach his posterity the Koran: and the chapter proceeds thus: "Who will be averse "to the religion of Abraham, but he whose mind "is infatuated? Surely we have chosen him in "this world, and in that which is to come he shall "be one of the righteous. When his Lord said "unto him, Resign thyself unto me, he answered, "I have resigned myself unto the Lord of all "creatures. And Abraham bequeathed this reli-"gion to his children, and Jacob did the same, "saying, My children, verily God hath chosen "this religion for you; therefore die not unless ye "also be resigned. Were ye present when Jacob "was at the point of death, when he said to his "sons, Whom will ye worship after me? They "answered, We will worship thy God, and the "God of thy fathers, Abraham, and Ismael, and "Isaac, one God, and to him will we be resigned. "That people are now passed away; they have "what they have gained, and ye shall have what "ye gain; and ye shall not be questioned con-"cerning

* Koran, ch. ii.

" cerning that which they have done. They say, " Become Jews or Christians, that ye may be " directed; say Nay; we follow the religion of " Abraham, the orthodox, who was no idolater; " say, We believe in God, and that which hath " been *sent down unto us*, [*viz. the Koran*] and " that which hath been sent down unto Abraham, " and Ismael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the " tribes, and that which was delivered unto " Moses and Jesus, and that which was delivered " unto the Prophets from their Lord; we make " no distinction between any of them, and to God " are we resigned *," &c.

Thus directly does Mahomet acknowledge that he drew the leading articles of his system from the sacred Scriptures; and undoubtedly he has adopted some of the highest importance: I quote one with pleasure. " It is not righteousness that " ye turn your faces in prayer towards the east " and the west; but righteousness is of him who " believeth in God, and the angels, and the Scrip- " tures, and the Prophets; who giveth money for " God's sake unto his kindred, and unto orphans, " and the needy, and the stranger, and those who " ask, and for redemption of captives; who is " constant at prayer, and giveth alms, and of those " who perform their covenant when they have " covenanted,

* Sale's Koran, ch. ii. p. 25.

"covenanted, and who behave themselves pa-
"tiently in adversity and hardships, and in time
"of violence; these are they who are true, and
"these are they who fear God." How plainly do we perceive in this passage the principles inculcated by the Prophet Isaiah, with such superior beauty and energy: "Is not this the
"fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of
"wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let
"the oppressed go free, and that ye break every
"yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,
"and that thou bring the poor that are cast out
"to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that
"thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself
"from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light
"break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteous-
"ness shall go before thee; the glory of the
"Lord shall be thy rereward. Then shalt thou
"call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt
"cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take
"away from the midst of thee the yoke, the
"putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;
"and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry,
"and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy
"light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as
"the noon-day *," &c.

It

* Isaiah lviii. 6, &c.

It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the absurdity and extravagance, the mixture of sensuality, licentiousness and deceit, which generally pervade the Koran *, justify the assertion, that its author was indebted for whatever degree of religious truth or virtuous principle is found in it, not to his own sagacity or his own rectitude of sentiment, but to those sacred sources of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, the divine authenticity of which he acknowledged, and the doctrines of which he was induced to adopt, in order to attract to himself as many as possible of the votaries of both these religions, in a country where their numbers were considerable, their ignorance

* In proof of this charge, it is unnecessary to multiply passages from the Koran, of absurdity and extravagance, as in chap. xv. the fall of the angels for refusing to worship Adam; in chap. xxvii. and xxxiv. the lapwing bringing in news to Solomon; the genii building for him; the ants and birds attending him, &c.; and chap. xvii on the celebrated night-journey to heaven; with Prideaux's account, p. 43. and Abulfeda Vita Muham. cap. xix; of licentiousness and fraud, chap. xxxiii; the revelation permitting the Prophet to multiply wives, "*a peculiar privilege above the rest of the true believers*," vide p. 281, and to take his adopted son's wife; and a revelation to justify an amour with his wife, in chap. lxvi.; of a sensual paradise, in various places, particularly chap. xxv. Consult on this subject White's Lampton's Lecture Sermons, particularly Sermon 6, 8 & 9; and Prideaux's Life of Mahomet, passim.

rance the easy prey of delusion, and their attachment to the religions they professed weakened by the errors which at that disastrous period had corrupted, and the dissensions which had disgraced, them *.

And now, on reviewing the facts and observations adduced in this section, it will be found, that the objection against the Jewish scheme, as being partial and confined to one obscure and insignificant nation, and therefore unworthy of the Deity, is false in fact, and inconclusive in reasoning; even without considering the Law as introductory of the Gospel; and that therefore, however confined in its immediate efficacy, its importance is clear, as being a necessary preparation for a pure and universal religion. This last is certainly the most decisive answer to the objection; yet independent of this, it has been proved, that the Jewish scheme was intended to produce, and did produce, a most important and beneficial effect, in checking error and idolatry through a great portion of mankind, while

* Vide Sale's Koran, the Preliminary Dissertation, sect. ii.; Prideaux's Life of Mahomet, the Preface; and Höttinger's Historia Orientalis, Lib. II. cap. ii. p. 212; De Statu Judæorum et Christianorum ante Muhammêd; and cap. v. De Causis Conservantibus Muhammedismi.

while it continued in operation. It has been proved, that this effect was intended and foreseen, and that it formed a direct object of the divine care, and, as it were, a leading motive in regulating the measures of the divine economy *. The establishment of the Jewish Law displayed to the nations of Egypt and Canaan, the most striking proofs of the power and justice of Jehovah, and his superiority over their base idols; inflicting the most signal punishment on their deluded worshippers, to prove his abhorrence of idolatry. The subsequent fortunes of the Jewish nation proclaimed the same great truths; in their apostasies and chastisements, as well as their repentance and deliverances, attesting the resistless power and overruling providence of their God, exercised not only over the Jews themselves, but all the nations placed in their neighbourhood, or affected by their fortunes: particularly after the establishment of the regal government, we see the conquests of David, the wisdom and wealth of Solomon, the magnificence of the Temple, and the splendor of the Jewish religion, attracting general attention. We see the situation of Judæa calculated to increase this effect: at the head of the Mediterranean Sea, in the neighbourhood of Phœnicia,

* Vide supra, p. 77 to 85.

Phœnicia, Egypt, Assyria, and Greece. The divine Providence connects the chosen people with these various powers; and from this connexion various opportunities arise of displaying to the heathen nations the most striking proofs of the power, and extorting from their most powerful monarchs the most public and solemn homage to the majesty, of Jehovah.

But especially during the Babylonish captivity, the tendency of Judaism to enlighten the heathen world becomes most conspicuous; it then exhibits its prophets and its martyrs, diffuses its instructions, lifts its head in the courts of monarchs, controls their fortunes and chastises their pride; till at length it is restored to its seat, now purified from idolatry; and by inculcating the belief of a future retribution, and by the energetic exhortations of its Prophets, confirmed by decided experience, it is enabled to preserve the worship of the true God, and a lively expectation of the promised Messiah, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed; an expectation not confined to the Jews alone, but certainly prevailing, though perhaps indistinctly understood, through many nations of the East.

The effects of such a dispensation in enlightening mankind could not have been inconsiderable, even though we at this time and in this land were unable distinctly to trace them. But they

are still visible even to us, in the universal fame of Abraham and Solomon through the East, and the multitudes who trace to them their religious rites and opinions; in the history of the Samaritan settlement, and the religions of Zoroaster and Mahomet *, at this day professed by such numerous nations.

Should it still be affirmed that the Jewish scheme could not have been divine, because it did not universally enlighten and reform mankind; we answer, to expect such an effect is altogether wild and extravagant, for there is no reason to suppose it could have been produced at that period of the world, or indeed at any period which has ever yet occurred, by any methods of the divine government, consistent with the established course of nature and the moral agency of man. So deeply was mankind sunk in error and ignorance, in idolatry and all the vices connected with it, that any reformation of an entire nation, and much more of all nations, seems to have been totally impracticable. If the Egyptians and Canaanites could not be reformed by the wonders they

* "The ancient Persians and modern Mahometans are "possibly (says Bishop Butler) instances of people, who "have had essential or natural religion enforced upon their "consciences by the means of the Scripture; though they "never had the genuine Scripture revelation, with its real "evidence, proposed to their consideration." Vide Analogy, Part II. ch. vi. p. 319.

they beheld, and the chastisements they suffered; if the Philistines, the Samaritans and the Assyrians, so long witnesses of the divine Providence over the Jews, continued still idolaters; it seems *certain* no nation could have been permanently and *exclusively attached* to the worship of Jehovah, except by placing it under a system of miraculous instruction and miraculous control, *nearly* or *exactly similar* to *that* under which the chosen people were *disciplined* and restrained. Now, that many different nations should be thus miraculously disciplined and controlled, as far as we can judge, could not take place without *totally altering the entire scheme of God's moral government*, and *utterly subverting the established course of nature*. And so long as any nations continued unenlightened and unreformed, the objection that the divine dispensations were partial and confined, would still remain. Is it not then evident, that such an objection rests on presumption, leads to absurdity, and would terminate in atheism?

But it is asked, Are not all partial dispensations unjust, and therefore unworthy of God? To this I answer, in the words of the celebrated Butler, that "there is nothing in all this ignorance, "doubtfulness and uncertainty, in all these va- "rieties, and supposed disadvantages of some in "comparison of others, respecting religion, but "may be paralleled by manifest analogies in the "natural

" natural dispensations of Providence at present,
" and considering ourselves merely in our tem-
" poral capacity.

" Nor is there any thing shocking in all this,
" or which would seem to bear hard upon the
" moral administration in nature, if we would
" really keep in mind, that every one shall be
" dealt *equitably* with: instead of forgetting this,
" or explaining it away, after it is acknowledged
" in words. All shadow of injustice, and indeed
" all harsh appearances, in this various economy
" of Providence, would be lost, if we would keep
" in mind, that every *merciful allowance* shall be
" made, and no more be required of any one,
" than what might have been equitably expected
" of him, from the circumstances in which he was
" placed; and not what might have been ex-
" pected, had he been placed in other circum-
" stances: *i. e.* in Scripture language, 'that every
" man shall be accepted *according to what he had*,
" not according to what he had not *.' This
" however doth not by any means imply, that all
" persons condition here, is equally advantageous
" with respect to futurity. And Providence's
" designing to place some in greater darkness
" with respect to religious knowledge, is no more
" a reason why they should not endeavour to get
" out of that darkness, and others to bring them
" out

* 2 Cor. viii. 12.

"out of it; than why ignorant and slow people; "in matters of other knowledge, should not en- "deavour to learn, or should not be instructed.

"It is not unreasonable to suppose, that the same "wise and good principle, whatever it was, which "disposed the Author of nature to make different "kinds and orders of creatures, disposed him "also to place creatures of like kinds, in different "situations: and that the same principle which "disposed him to make creatures of different "moral capacities, disposed him also to place "creatures of like moral capacities, in different "religious situations; and even the same crea- "tures, in different periods of their being."

Again, "A system or constitution (as that of "nature) implies variety; and so complicated an "one as this world, very great variety. So that "were *Revelation universal*, yet from men's "different capacities of understanding, from the "different lengths of their lives, their different "educations and other *external* circumstances, "and from their difference of temper and bodily "constitution; their religious situations would be "widely different, and the disadvantage of some "in comparison of others, perhaps, altogether as "much as at present *." Considerations these, which prove that all objections to Revelation derived from its want of universality, are contrary to

* Butler's Anal. Part II. ch. vi. p. 320.

to the analogy of nature, and founded on mere arrogance and presumption *.

* If any one who may happen to peruse this Work, finds himself disposed to believe, that the difficulties or objections which he thinks may be alleged against Revelation, from its *not being universal*, or its *proof appearing deficient*, justify him in *neglecting* its *evidence* or *violating* its *precepts*; I earnestly entreat him to read and to reflect on the considerations Butler suggests, in the remaining part of this chapter of the Analogy; to prove that such difficulties and objections may be intended to try his sincerity and moral rectitude, and that negligence and inattention under such a probation may prove most criminal and destructive. Vide Butler, Part II. ch. vi. p. 323.

PART III.

LECTURE V.

SECT. II.

LECTURE V.

SECT. II.—*Philosophy not introduced into Europe until near the period of the Babylonish Captivity—Thales—Anaximander—Anaxagoras—Probability that some of their opinions were ultimately derived from the Jews—General circumstances in the history of Grecian philosophy and religion render the same thing probable of them—Their sages travelling for learning into Egypt and the East—Connexion of the Jews with Egypt at this period—Early philosophers of Greece delivered their tenets dogmatically—Inference from thence—The higher we trace the philosophy and religion of Greece, the purer it is found—Inference—Providence gradually prepared the world for the Gospel—Grecian language and literature—Connexion of Greece with Asia increased—Conquests of Alexander—Singular distribution of the Jews at this period—Jews in Egypt use the Greek tongue—Septuagint translation, its importance—The formation of the Alexandrian library—Sects of Grecian philosophy—Their effect—Extension of the Roman empire—Facilitated the spread of Christianity.*

PART III.

LECT. V.

SECT. II.

EFFECTS OF JUDAISM ON THE GENTILES.

HITHERTO we have traced the effects of the Jewish dispensation, chiefly in enlightening the Oriental nations; but let it be remembered, that previously to the Babylonish captivity the greatest part of Europe had been sunk in barbarism, and Greece itself began to emerge from the depths of ignorance only at that period. It was not until after * the first capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, that Thales travelled into Egypt, and from thence introduced into his native land, geometry, astronomy and philosophy: he appears to have been amongst the first who gave his countrymen any rational idea of the origin of the world; and his opinion, that *water was the first principle*

* Vide Chronological Tables of Marshal; and the Universal History; also Brucker's Historia Philosophiæ, lib. ii. cap. i.

principle of things, and *that God was that Spirit who formed all things out of water*, seems evidently borrowed from the Mosaic account indistinctly understood; that "In the beginning the earth "was without form, and void; and darkness was "upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of "God moved upon the face of the waters *."

Anaximander †, the friend and disciple of Thales, seems to have expressed his opinion, though in different terms, yet such as indicate that it also sprang from the same source. He taught that *infinity* was *the first principle* of all things, from which they are produced, and in which they terminate. The most rational explanation of this idea seems to be, that it means that indefinite chaos combined with that infinite Mind from which all things proceeded.

The great Anaxagoras ‡ also, who first distinctly taught the separate existence of a Supreme all-directing Mind, spoke of the material world as originating from a confused mass, consisting of different

* Genesis i. 1.

Thales enim Milesius qui primo de talibus rebus quæsivit, aquam dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem eam mentem quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret. Cicero de Natura Deorum, lib. i. cap. x.; and Bruckeri Historia Philosophiæ, lib. ii. cap. i. vol. i. p. 465.

† Bruckeri Historia, lib. ii. cap. i. sect. x. p. 483, who explains the opinion of Anaximander as I have done.

‡ Ib. sect. xx. p. 503.

different kinds of particles, each of which afterwards combined in homogeneous masses; an opinion so similar to that of the Mosaic records, that we can scarcely doubt but that it was from them derived.

But, not to enter into a disquisition unnecessary to the object of this Work, and in which certainty is scarcely attainable, it may be sufficient to remark some general circumstances in the history of the Grecian philosophy and religion, which appear to confirm the opinion of their having been derived ultimately from the source of the Jewish revelations; though corrupted and debased with the impure mixtures of Egyptian mystery and superstition, and rendered still more extravagant and incoherent, by that poetic imagery which the vivid imagination of the Greeks so promptly invented, and so fondly retained.

One of these circumstances is, that Egypt was certainly the school to which the sages of Greece resorted for instruction *, at and after the Babylonish

* Brucker affirms this of Thales, from whom the Ionic sect derived their opinions; and conceived that Thales derived his opinion from the traditions of the Phœnicians, "which he had learned in Crete and in Egypt; who in "their cosmogonies, laying aside an operating cause, philo-"sophised on the origin of natural objects from a chaos." Vide Vol. i. p. 466. If this is true, it is a melancholy instance,

lonish captivity; and that some are related to have extended their journies and researches into Chaldæa and Assyria. Now at all times Egypt had maintained such frequent intercourse with Judæa, that it could not be difficult there to learn the Jewish tenets, and have access to the Jewish scriptures; while at the same time Assyria was full of the dispersed and captive Jews.

We have indeed the most decisive proof of the constant intercourse and close connexion of the Jews with Egypt, from the multitudes who at the beginning of the Babylonish captivity fled thither, and settled there in direct opposition to the commands of their God and the warnings of his Prophet *; an event speedily followed by the reduction of Egypt under the Assyrian empire, and the signal punishment of the idolatrous Jews in that country, according to the prediction of Jeremiah: occurrences which would naturally excite a considerable degree of attention to the Law and the Prophets amongst the remaining Jews, both in Egypt and Assyria; and possibly even amongst such

* Vide Jeremiah xlii. xliii. xliv. & xlvi.

stance, how perversely human reason misused and misinterpreted the information which Revelation had supplied. The tenet of the soul's immortality is confessed to have been brought from Egypt to Greece by Thales. Brucker, vol. i. p. 475. Vide also Brucker's Account of the Opinions of Orpheus, particularly as to a Chaos, vol. i. p. 390.

such of the natives of those countries, as well as foreigners, who were more learned and inquisitive.

From this period the intercourse between Europe, Asia and Egypt, continued to increase; and consequently, access to the sacred treasures of revelation became more practicable.

It is another remarkable circumstance, connected with our present subject, that the tenets of the earliest Grecian philosophers were delivered, not in the form of regular systems, discovered by sagacious investigation and supported by regular proof; but rather as unconnected dogmas, learned from tradition and resting on authority *: which would have been the natural consequence of their being formed from fragments of the Jewish revelations and records, separated from the scheme, and unsupported by the proofs and facts, with which they had been originally combined.

It is equally remarkable, that the higher we trace the theological opinions of the Grecian philosophers,

* The sages known by the name of the seven wise men of Greece, it is acknowledged, delivered their doctrines in this form; and Brucker observes of Thales, "As the real "reason which induced Thales to admit his grand principle "is unknown, it is not improbable that he arrived at it by "tradition rather than by reasoning." Vol. i. p. 467.

philosophers, and the popular systems of religion in the ancient world, the more pure and uncorrupted are they found *. The nearer we approach to the sources of Eastern tradition, the more conspicuous appears the radiance of that heavenly light of original Revelation, whose beams, though clouded and dispersed, still contributed to enlighten and direct mankind: the more clear traces do we discover of that primeval and patriarchal religion, which acknowledged the existence and inculcated the worship of the true and only God. We find no mortals yet exalted to divinities, no images in their temples, no impure or cruel rites. But when men "knowing God, glorified him not as God, their foolish hearts were darkened †;" notwithstanding the progress of reason and civilization, the absurdities, profanations and crimes of idolatry multiplied without end ‡; philosophy, plunging into vain disputations, wandered from the

* Vide Leland on the Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, Part i. ch. ii. & xx.; and the learned Shuckford, in his Connection of sacred and profane History, the Preface, and Book v. sect. ii.; Dionysius Halicarnassus on the ancient Religion of the Romans; Plutarch, in Numa; and Juvenal, Sat. xiii. 46.

† Rom. i. 21.

‡ Vide supra, Vol. I. Part II. Lect. I.

the truth, or, shrinking from the terrors of persecution *, did not dare to avow it.

But amidst this increasing gloom of idolatrous ignorance and error, this wide-spreading confusion, which threatened to reduce the whole moral and religious world to a wild chaos of vice and disorder, an over-ruling Providence gradually prepared for introducing the glorious light of the Gospel, and turning mankind from the power of Satan unto God. Literature, philosophy, and the fine arts, were rapidly diffused over Greece, and cultivated with a degree of ardor unequalled in any other age or country. Broken into small and free governments, blessed with the finest climate, the most picturesque scenery, and the most ingenious and animated people, here was formed a language, copious, expressive and harmonious; and here were produced those immortal works in poetry, eloquence and philosophy, which rendered that language the universal dialect of the polite and learned, both in the East and West; and thus prepared it to become a general and permanent medium of communication, in which the records and the truths of Christianity might be distinctly and safely handed to succeeding ages.

In

* Vide Leland's Advantage of Revelation, Part i. from chap. x. to xxii.

In the mean time, Rome was gradually emerging from weakness and barbarism to power and celebrity on one side; while on the other, the connexion of the European world with the East, the residence of the chosen people of God, and consequently the fountain of religious knowledge, became daily more close and constant, by the mutual wars and invasions of the Greeks and Asiatics, the settlement of the Grecian colonies in Asia, and the extended commerce of the Greeks and Phœnicians: until at length the conquests of Alexander cemented the two continents together, and rendered the Grecian language universal and popular over the East.

We now find the Jews placed in a different situation from any preceding period of their history *. While a sufficient part of the nation had been restored to Judæa, and there settled, to answer the primary purpose of forming a separate people, in order to preserve the Law and the Prophets, rebuild the Temple, and prepare the scene where the Messiah was personally to appear; where he was to verify the prophecies, particularly with respect to his descent, the place of his birth, and the minutest circumstances of his personal character and sufferings; where he was to promulgate his religion, and lay down his

* Vide the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

his life for man; we see another great body of the nation retiring into Egypt, building a temple there, publicly exercising their religion, and flourishing in such multitudes under the protection of Alexander, and his successors, that the Jews in Egypt nearly if not entirely equalled those of Judæa, in number, wealth, and influence *; while they adopt the Grecian language so universally, that it becomes necessary to translate the Scriptures into Greek for their use †, and thus make them accessible to the learned and inquisitive in every country, whenever their attention should be excited to this study. And it should be remarked, that so necessary was such an adjustment of circumstances to produce this salutary effect, in opposition to the exclusive temper of the Jews settled in Judæa; that this translation, which must have been received with such joy by the Jewish colonies, was regarded as the

* Vide Prideaux's Connection, Part ii. book i sect. viii. Vol. iii. p. 63.: Josephus's Antiquities. book xi. ch. ii. book xii. ch. i. iii. iv.; book xiii. ch. iii. as to the building of the temple in Egypt; also his History of the Jewish War, book vii. ch. x. sect. iii book xiv. ch. viii. & x.; also his work against Apion, book ii. sect. iv. v. & vi.: and the Universal History, Vol. iv. book ii.

† Vide Prideaux and Josephus as quoted above; and the Universal History, Vol. iv. book ii. ch. i.

the subject of national mourning by the Jews at Jerusalem *.

The unspeakable importance of this translation, which gradually included all the Scriptures of the Old Testament, has been already noticed †: by it the grand truths of religion, the history of Divine Providence, and the prophecies announcing the Messiah, became accessible to the learned and inquisitive, in every part of the then civilized world. All possibility of either questioning the existence or falsifying the contents of those prophecies was thus precluded, and the stability of this signal proof of Revelation secured; though the rulers, doctors, and priests of that nation with whom they had been originally deposited, rejected that divine Personage whom these prophecies announced; and must therefore have wished, had it been in their power, to alter their contents, in order to disprove their application.

About the period when this translation was completed, we see the Ptolemies collecting the celebrated library at Alexandria, which for such a length of time formed the greatest depository of learning in the world, and which was so much admired and imitated by other princes ‡. And its

* Universal History, Vol. iv. book ii. ch. i. p. 28.

† Vide Vol. I. pp. 4 & 5.

‡ Vide Prideaux, Part ii. book i. vol. iii. p. 21; and book ii. p. 103.

its being formed in the very same city with the most numerous colony of the Jews in Egypt, while it must have attracted thither all foreigners who were solicitous to acquire learning, must also have given them an opportunity of observing a form of religion so singular as that which the Jews maintained; and of inquiring into its principles and origin; an inquiry which the translation of the Scriptures into Greek rendered practicable: while the cessation of prophecy amongst the Jews, soon after their restoration from captivity, closed the canon of the Jewish Scriptures, and proved that the knowledge which that translation could supply was perfect and complete.

The same providential system of preparation for the introduction of a pure and universal religion, was equally conspicuous in many other gradual movements in the world, all concurring to promote the same effect. The inquisitive and vain-glorious turn of the Grecian character multiplied philosophic sects, which by their perpetual disputations directed the attention of mankind to religious and moral speculations; gradually undermined the influence, by exposing the absurdity, of Pagan superstition and idolatry; and though they did not substitute in their room any perfect system of natural religion, yet many of its great truths were occasionally debated upon with spirit and subtlety, and though not clearly proved

proved or practically inculcated, they yet became the objects of general interest and curiosity: so that the want of further information *, and above all of such divine instruction as should remove men's doubts and terrors on these most awful subjects, was felt and acknowledged by the most sagacious and reflecting minds; and therefore such instruction would be more attentively listened to, and more thankfully and joyfully received.

Connected with the same system, and tending to promote the same effect, was the great and permanent extension of the Roman empire; which broke down all the barriers of separation between the Eastern and Western worlds, united the Euphrates and the Thames under the same masters, and blended all the civilized states of Greece and Asia, of Africa and Europe, in one great community; in every part of which, the Grecian language, now the language of the Sacred Records, became as it were the common tongue of the learned and the polite; while a perpetual intercourse between the various parts of this mighty empire, the establishment of a firm and regular police through its whole extent, and, above all, that universal peace, which its undisputed

* Vide Leland on the Necessity of Revelation, Part i. ch. xxi.; Clarke's Evidences of natural and revealed Religion, in Prop. vii.

undisputed ascendency secured through the entire civilized world, when the Gospel of peace was first promulgated; all these circumstances secured to the Teachers of that Gospel, ready access to all the nations of the world capable of profiting by the sacred truths they taught, and gave men leisure to consider their unspeakable importance, and examine the evidence to which they appealed.

PART III.

LECTURE VI.

SECT. I.

JUDAISM PREPARATORY TO CHRISTIANITY.

LECTURE VI.

SECT. I.—*Objection derived from the supposed inconsistency of the Jewish and Christian schemes—The Law and the Gospel consistent—Jewish scheme intended, from the first, to introduce the Gospel—Proved from the promise to Abraham—Circumstances attending the repetition of this promise, shew that Abraham was a type of Christ—Jacob's prophecy concerning Shiloh—Psalm* ii. xxii. xlvii. lxvii. *and* lxxii.—*Isaiah* ii. *and* xlix.—*These prophecies clearly prove the Mosaic Law was to introduce and then give place to the Gospel—Why Moses did not expressly announce the intended abrogation of the Mosaic Law—He has intimated this in his promise of a prophet to arise "like unto himself"—Our Lord alone answers his character—Christ a priest after the order of Melchisedek—Meaning of this declaration explained in the Epistle to the Hebrews—Argument in this Epistle, ch.* x.—*Jeremiah prophesies the substitution of the Gospel for the Law—And the spiritual nature of the Gospel.*

PART III.

LECT. VI.

SECT. I.

JUDAISM PREPARATORY TO CHRISTIANITY.

MATTHEW v. 17.

"THINK not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

THE series of facts adduced in the last Lecture, might be sufficient to shew that the Jewish dispensation was calculated, not only to preserve true religion amongst the Jews, but to check idolatry, and diffuse religious knowledge amongst the surrounding nations, as far as appears to have been practicable in the state of mankind at the various periods when these facts took place; and above all, that it was fitted to operate as a preparation for the introduction of that spiritual and universal religion promulgated by the Gospel of Christ. But in opposition to this inference we find it alleged, that the Jewish scheme could not from its very nature operate

as preparation for the Gospel, being of an opposite, and, as is asserted, even of a contradictory character; expressly declaring itself of eternal obligation, while it as expressly is confined to a single nation, excluding all the rest of mankind. And hence, it is said, these systems of religion cannot both proceed from God.

It shall be the object of this Lecture to refute this objection, by shewing that there is no inconsistency between the Mosaic and Christian dispensations; but that the Jewish Law was from the first intended not to be of eternal obligation, but declared to be subservient to and introductory of the Gospel, with which it is connected by a perpetual unity of design, and an accurate correspondence of parts, all centering in one grand object—the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, for which the Jewish scheme was an indispensable and effective preparation.

That this scheme was from the first intended, not for the exclusive benefit of the chosen people, but as instrumental to the introduction of a universal blessing to mankind, is evident from the very first promise made to Abraham, which, to the personal and national blessing with which it encouraged and rewarded the faith and obedience of the Patriarch, added this remarkable declaration, as the crown and completion of all: "And in thee shall all families of the earth be

blessed *." A declaration again repeated to the same Patriarch on two solemn occasions, first, on disclosing to him the intended punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah, and receiving with the most gracious condescension his humble but earnest intercession in favour of those few righteous who might be found in those receptacles of guilt †; and again still more emphatically, in consequence of his obeying the voice of God, and "not withholding his son, his only son ‡."

It deserves to be particularly noticed, that in the former of these transactions, the Patriarch *interceding* with God as "Judge of all the earth §," was an evident *representation* of that GREAT INTERCESSOR whose appearance was predicted in the promised blessing; and that in the latter he beheld, in the commanded sacrifice, and the providential restoration of his only-begotten son, the clear representation of the only-begotten Son of God; prefiguring at once the voluntary sacrifice and the triumphant resurrection of that Christ who was the promised seed, "in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed ‖." So that in both cases, but especially the last, the nature of the promised blessing was not obscurely intimated

* Gen. xii. 3. † Ibid. xviii. ‡ Ibid. xxii. 16.
§ Ibid. xviii. 25. ‖ Vide supra p. 210 to 214.

intimated by the immediate circumstances attending the divine declaration.

As the Patriarch thus "rejoiced to behold the day of Christ," it cannot be doubted but he communicated to his family this joyful hope, and explained the great object to which it was directed; so that when the same promise was solemnly renewed, first to Isaac *, and afterwards to Jacob †, its meaning and object were distinctly understood by these Patriarchs; and that wherever the blessing of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is referred to, or the covenant which God made with them and their posterity recognised as the glory and the hope of Israel, this essential part of it, the promise of the Messiah, and the blessing by him to be communicated to all the nations of the earth, must have been equally and perpetually recognised as the great object of the Jewish scheme, to which every other part of it was instrumental and subordinate. So that the original foundation and primary characteristic of this scheme, far from being *partial* and *exclusive*, avowedly extended to all the nations of the earth, and centered in that Messiah, who is the grand object of all the divine dispensations, from the creation of the world to its close.

This original and perpetual purpose of God, to extend the effects of the Jewish dispensation to all

* Gen. xxvi. 4. † Ibid. xxviii. 14.

the nations of the earth, is also most clearly recognised in the celebrated prophecy of Jacob; "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a "lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh "come: and unto him shall the gathering of the "people be*." Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the event described, and the period marked out by the "*sceptre*'s departing *from Judah*, and the Lawgiver from between his feet;" there appears no reasonable ground for doubting, that the word Shiloh designates the Messiah, and that the gathering of the people to him pre-signifies the extension of the church to all nations without distinction.

The admission of the Gentiles into the church of God is indeed an event which the inspired Psalmist predicts, in a variety of passages, with the greatest clearness; and which all the Prophets dwell on with such distinctness, copiousness and animation,

* Genesis xlix. 10.—I am disposed to adopt Warburton's interpretation of this prophecy, in preference to any other; and to believe that it denoted the continuance of the theocratic sceptre over the Jews, which remained until our Saviour came, who instituted in its place his kingdom, "not of this world." Warburton, Book v. sect. iii. subsect. iii. Vol. iv. p. 243 to 266.—The interpretation of Patrick, from Wagenseil, seems the next in clearness and probability — Consult also Newton's fourth Dissertation; Poli Synopsin, Dodd, and the Bibliotheca Biblica, in locum.

animation, as prove, beyond controversy, that this great consummation was uninterruptedly the leading object of the divine purposes and communications, to which the whole Jewish scheme was merely preparatory and subordinate. It is expedient to cite a few passages to illustrate this assertion; a few however will be sufficient, for its truth is so certain, that it scarcely requires confirmation; and the passages establishing it are so numerous, to transcribe them all would be at once tedious and unnecessary.

In Psalm ii. which is clearly and exclusively prophetic of the Messiah, the Psalmist asks, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set "themselves, and the rulers take counsel together "against the Lord, and against his * Anointed, "saying,

* All the versions agree in translating this passage in a manner applicable to the Messiah. The Chaldee Targum uses the very word Messiah, and the Seventy the word Christ or Anointed. Vide Biblia Polyglotta Waltoni. Indeed the 7th, 8th and 12th verses are entirely incapable of being fully accomplished, or clearly understood, except as applied to the Messiah. The only variety of any moment is in the 12th verse, where, instead of "Kiss the Son," (i.e. as we explain it, adore him) all the versions, except the Syriac, read, "receive instruction, lest the Lord be angry," &c. This makes the sense more clear and coherent, and is justified by a very slight change in the original. Yet Houbigant, whose authority is considerable, retains the present reading of our Hebrew text, and translates it, "Adore the Son."

" saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and " cast away their cords from us." This clear prophecy of the resistance which would be attempted against the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, is followed by as clear a prediction that this opposition would be ineffectual: " He that " sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord " shall have them in derision. Then shall he " speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in " his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king " upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the " decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art " my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Thus emphatically and distinctly does the inspired Penman predict the divine nature and supreme exaltation of the Messiah; and he then proceeds to declare the universal extent of his dominion: " Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen " for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of " the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break " them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them " in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now " therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges " of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and " rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he " be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his " wrath is kindled but a little: Blessed are all " they that put their trust in him." It seems im-

possible to describe in clearer terms the Messiah's reign, as not confined like the Mosaic Law to a single nation, but including within its sway all nations and regions of the earth.

In Psalm xxii.* which describes with equal distinctness the rejection, the sufferings, and the death of the appointed Saviour, even to the minutest particulars of "their piercing his hands and his feet, parting his garments among them, and casting lots upon his vesture †," the prophecy goes on to declare, that notwithstanding this apparent depression, God would regard and exalt the sufferer: "He hath not despised nor abhorred "the affliction of the afflicted: neither hath he "hid his face from him: but when he cried unto "him, he heard." And it proceeds to declare that the final event would be, his extending universally the dominion of true religion: "All the "ends of the world shall remember and turn "unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the "nations shall worship before thee. For the "kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor "among the nations."

With equal sublimity does Psalm xlvii. call on all nations; "O clap your hands, all ye nations; "shout

* Vide Matthew xxvii. 46. where our Lord appropriates this Psalm as directly applicable to his sufferings.

† Ver. 16 & 18

"shout unto God with the voice of triumph. "For God is the King of all the earth. Sing ye "praises with understanding. God reigneth over "the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of "his holiness. The princes of the people are "gathered together unto the people of the God "of Abraham: for the shields of the earth belong "unto God: he is greatly exalted."

Psalms lxvii. & lxxii. are not less express in predicting, that a period should arrive, when the dominion of the God of Israel should be acknowledged by all the nations of the earth. The latter especially declares, that a Son should inherit the kingdom of David, who should "judge the people with righteousness, and the poor with judgment." And the extent and effects of his dominion are described in terms applicable only to the Messiah's reign: "In his days shall the righteous "flourish: and abundance of peace, so long as "the moon endureth. He shall have dominion "also from sea to sea, and from the river unto "the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the "wilderness shall bow before him; and his ene-"mies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish "and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings "of Arabia and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all "kings shall fall down before him; all nations "shall serve him." The nature of this homage, and its motives, are declared to be spiritual and religious:

religious: "For he shall deliver the needy when "he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no "helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, "and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall "redeem their soul from deceit and violence: "and precious shall their blood be in his sight. "His name shall endure for ever: his name shall "be continued as long as the sun: and men shall "be blessed in him: all nations shall call him "blessed." Enraptured at the glorious prospect of the universal dominion of Him, in whom, according to the promise made to Abraham, "all nations were to be blessed," the Psalmist exclaims, "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, "who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed "be his glorious name for ever: and let the "whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and "amen."

Isaiah, the great evangelic prophet, is still more explicit in predicting the extension of the Messiah's kingdom over the Gentile world; and that the character of the religion to be by him established, would be in the highest degree spiritual and comprehensive, free from any local or national restriction, and unincumbered with any burthensome ritual or ceremonial observances. Yet that Israel should be instrumental in forming this kingdom, and should (ultimately at least) partake the blessings it confers, "It shall come to pass,"

pass," says he, "in the last (or latter) days, that "the mountain of the Lord's house shall be "established in the top of the mountains, and "shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations "shall flow unto it. And many people shall go "and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the "mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God "of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and "we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall "go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord "from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among "the nations, and shall rebuke * many people: "and they shall beat their swords into plough-"shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, "neither shall they learn war any more †."

This prediction of the extent and effects of the Messiah's reign, though exactly descriptive of the genuine character of the Christian religion, and its perpetual tendency to produce the full effect here described, yet undoubtedly peculiarly relates to a period in the history of the church of Christ not yet arrived; to the final result of a system yet in progress; which, whenever it shall be accomplished,

* Instead of "he shall rebuke many people," Lowth translates, "he shall work conviction in many peoples," which gives a much more clear and consistent sense.

† Isaiah ii. 2, &c

complished, will display in full lustre the wisdom and the mercy of the divine dispensations. But it is such a result as the continuance of the Jewish ritual, and the restrictions of the Jewish Law, could never produce. It therefore implies an improvement of that Law, and a breaking down of that wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, founded on the Mosaic ritual, which the Messiah, appearing as a new Lawgiver, could alone have authority to remove.

In various subsequent chapters, the Prophet with still greater clearness predicts the extension of the Messiah's kingdom over the heathen world. I select only one passage, as remarkable from its connecting this prediction with the declaration of the Messiah's humiliation; and therefore proving the kingdom described by the Prophet, was spiritual, not temporal: "And now, saith the Lord "that formed me from the womb to be his ser- "vant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though "Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious "in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be "my strength. And he said, It is a light thing "that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up "the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved "of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the "Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to "the ends of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the "Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him

"whom

"whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation "abhorreth, to a servant of rulers; Kings shall "see and arise; princes also shall worship the "name of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy "One of Israel, and he shall choose thee *."

Thus expressly do the Prophets foretel the universal extent and the spiritual nature of the Messiah's reign. Now, had no distinct and direct intimation been given, that a change must take place in the character of the religion established by divine interposition, in order to fit it for this greater extension, and more spiritual efficacy; yet the nature of the case would compel us to infer the necessity of such a change.

A religion which was to be received in every nation and region of the globe, could not, like the Jewish Law, require that all the adult males of every nation professing it, should visit the Temple at Jerusalem three times each year, to celebrate the three great festivals: this would be physically impossible. It could not enjoin the observance of those various rites, ceremonies, and institutions, which were either commemorative of events in which the Jewish nation alone were interested, or which were calculated to separate them from all other nations, by a marked opposition of laws and manners: this would be totally unnatural

* Isaiah xlix. 5—7.

unnatural and irrational, when it was predicted that the Jewish dispensation should terminate in a religious system, calculated to *attract*, not to *repel*, the rest of mankind, and destined to embrace all the nations of the earth.

It is indeed unreasonable to expect that the Jewish Lawgiver, at the very moment he was delivering his Law, should be directed by God to weaken the reverence of the nation for it, by declaring that its duration would be short, and its obligation transitory; or that, while he was labouring to impress the necessity of avoiding all similarity of manners, principles and religion, with the surrounding nations, he should at the same moment distinctly announce that it was for the sake of these very nations, ultimately, that the peculiar scheme of the Jewish institutions was formed, and that this scheme would terminate in the abolition of all the distinctions now established.

We know the Jews were at that time at once dull and carnally minded, very averse to the restraints their Law imposed, and above all to its prohibitions against imitating the manners of their neighbours, sharing in their festivities and idolatries, and uniting with them by intermarriages*. And we can hardly conceive it possible for Moses to have expressed to them such sentiments a

these,

* Vide supra, p. 163 to 166; and Vol. I. p. 206 to 228.

these, without utterly alienating them from the system he proposed, and subverting the influence of his Laws by the very manner of promulgating them; and this without the least conceivable necessity for acting so hazardous a part, or the prospect of any advantage to be derived from it.

The divine wisdom is indeed most conspicuous in the conduct of this as of every other part of the Jewish scheme. In the infancy of the Jewish people, while they were immature in intellect, and wedded to external objects, a Law adapted to that state, and calculated at the same time to prepare for a more universal and perfect religion, was employed to control them by its restraints, while it attracted and engaged them by its ceremonies and its festivals. During this stage of their progress, it was unnecessary, and would probably have been injurious, to have announced distinctly the future abrogation of the ceremonial Law, and the admission of the Gentiles into the church of God. But as soon as the adherence of the people to that Law was sufficiently secured by its long establishment, and by the erection of the Temple; the Prophets were empowered to predict this constantly intended change in the divine dispensations, with perpetually increasing clearness, as that change approached.

It ought however to be observed, that the Jewish Lawgiver, to prevent all suspicion of inconsistency

inconsistency in the divine conduct, not only recorded the promise to Abraham *, and the prophecy of Jacob †, but was himself empowered to intimate the purpose of God, to send at some future period another Lawgiver, authorized to promulgate a new Law.

This seems plainly the purport of his celebrated prophecy, delivered towards the close of his own ministry: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto "thee a Prophet from the midst of thy brethren, "like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. "According to all that thou desiredst of the "Lord thy God, in the day of the assembly, "saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the "Lord my God; neither let me see this great "fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord "said unto me, They have well spoken that they "have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet "from among their brethren, like unto thee, "and I will put my words in his mouth, and he "shall speak unto them all that I shall command "him. And it shall come to pass, that whoso-"ever will not hearken unto my words which he "shall speak in my name, I will require it of "him ‡."

It has been justly observed, that this Prophet, to be like unto Moses must be a LAWGIVER; for this

* Vide supra, p. 354.
† Vide supra, p. 356, 7.
‡ Deut. xviii. 15. &c.

this appears the essential distinction between him and all inferior prophets *.. We cannot suppose the divine Messenger thus pre-eminently marked out, was to do nothing more than cause the ancient statutes of his predecessor to remain as originally established; since that essential character of similarity would thus be wanting, and no sufficient reason would appear for *his* mission being *peculiarly* predicted. And since the promulgation of a new Law implies a change of the pre-existing system, the certainty of such a change being intended may be fairly inferred from this prophecy.

We cannot but observe how accurately the *meek* and *humble* tenour of our Saviour's life, and the merciful nature of all his stupendous miracles, accords with the *motive* assigned by the Jews, for imploring that they might not again receive the will

* Vide Newton's sixth Dissertation; where it seems to me clearly proved, that this prophecy cannot be applied either to Joshua or any other successor of Moses, as judge or king: nor yet to any single prophet or succession of prophets; particularly from the three concluding verses of Deuteronomy, probably added by Ezra, and the history in Numbers xii. from 1 to 8.—Vide also Mr. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, Vol. ii. Book ii. sect. 3. ch. 3. This learned writer has very fully treated of the subject of this entire Lecture, in his second Book, to which I would refer my reader; as I conceive it unnecessary for me to dwell more fully than I have done, on a subject which has been so lately and amply discussed by this learned Divine.

will of God in the same manner as they had done at Mount Sinai; even the *overwhelming terror* with which they were then filled, "Let me not "hear again the voice of the Lord my God; "neither let me see this great fire any more, that "I die not." God, indulgent to this weakness of human nature, approves of and grants this entreaty: and as the mode of impressing the Jewish Law was suited to its nature as a system of coercion; so the Gospel scheme, which proclaimed not only "Glory to God in the highest," but "on earth peace, and good will to man," was ushered in with the most attractive manifestations of mildness and mercy, benignity and love. As Moses deserved the epithet of the "meekest of men," so the Son of God displayed meekness and forbearance as much greater, as the dignity from which he stooped was unspeakably exalted, his voluntary humiliation profound, and his sufferings unparalleled. How wonderful the coincidence of the prophetic description and the real history! "Behold," (the evangelic Prophet thus anticipates the facts) "my servant whom I uphold; mine elect, "in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my "spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgment "to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, "nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the "smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall

"bring forth judgment unto truth*. He shall "not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set "judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait "for his law †." And again, "He was oppressed, "and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he "is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a "sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened "not his mouth ‡." Yet, notwithstanding this humiliation, he displayed a dignity as a divine Lawgiver, which no other prophet presumed to claim. "He spake as one having authority," as exercising a right not only to explain and enforce the Mosaic Laws, but to *repeal*, to *alter*, and to improve them; as in the instance of the liberty with respect to divorce, which our Lord states Moses to have yielded to the Jews "for the hardness of their hearts;" but which he disallows, as inconsistent with the original strictness of the marriage tie, and the perfect purity of the Gospel scheme §.

And to complete the accurate accomplishment of the Mosaic prediction, how awfully is that clause fulfilled, which declares in the name of Jehovah,

* Lowth, for the words "he shall bring forth judgment unto truth," reads "he shall publish judgment so as to establish it perfectly;" which gives a much more clear sense.

† Isaiah xlii. 1—4. ‡ Isaiah liii. 7.

§ Matt. xix. 3—9.

Jehovah, "Whosoever will not hearken unto my "words which he shall speak in my name, I will "require it of him *." The Jewish nation did not hearken to the promised Prophet; and of the whole nation how awfully has it been required! Eighteen hundred years dispersion and degradation has not yet closed the effect of that dreadful imprecation, "His blood be on us, and on our children †."

Thus is Jesus of Nazareth, though in his DIVINE NATURE infinitely *superior*, yet as a *Prophet* accurately *like* unto Moses: in his office as legislator; in his full participation of the divine councils and the divine influence, for "God gave not the spirit by measure unto him;" in the magnitude and variety of his miracles; in the importance and permanence of that religious system which he introduced; in the meekness of his character ‡, and the signal punishments with which God has vindicated the authority and punished the neglect of his Laws.

Subsequent intimations of the intended substitution of a more spiritual religion, and a more refined

* Deut. xviii. 19. † Matt. xxvii. 25.

‡ For a variety of more minute points of resemblance, consult Bishop Newton's sixth Dissertation; Eusebius, Demonstratio Evangelica, lib. i. cap. iii. and lib. ix. cap. xi.; and Collatio Philippi a Limborch cum erudito Judæo, p. 4, 31, 289, & seq.; and Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, Vol. ii. pp. 145 & 266.

refined and perfect Law in place of the Mosaic, are frequent and clear. The fact recorded by the Jewish Lawgiver, of the great patriarch Abraham having paid religious reverence to Melchizedek, "the priest of the most high God," receiving his blessing, and paying him tithes, is alluded to by the inspired Psalmist, at the very period when the Levitical priesthood and the ceremonial Law were most fully established: when he describes that promised ruler, whom he terms "his Lord," declaring, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit "thou on my right hand, until I make thine ene-"mies thy footstool;" to whom he ascribes as a distinguishing feature of his character, his possessing a priesthood similar to that of Melchizedek, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of "Melchizedek *." This declaration the Apostle to the Hebrews argues on at large †, and irrefutably proves,

* Vide Gen. xiv. 18—20; and compare Psalm cx. 4. and Heb. vi. 20. with the entire chap. vii.

† The general scope of the Apostle's argument is, that Abraham acknowledged the superiority of Melchizedek; that his order of priesthood was therefore prior and superior to the Aaronical order; and that Christ being of that order, as the Psalmist prophesies, his priesthood is superior to and supersedes the Aaronical, which must therefore be changed, and with it the Levitical Law. In the 2d verse the Apostle declares,

proves, that it implies the abrogation of the Levitical Law, and the substitution of a more perfect religion. "If," says he, "perfection were by the "Levitical

declares, Melchizedek was by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, that is "king of peace." In these great and peculiar characters the priesthood of Christ was pre-eminently distinguished. The Apostle then in the 3d verse describes the priesthood of Melchizedek by additional characters, which belong not to him as a human individual, but to the priesthood he possessed. In this sense he was "without [i. e. independent of] "father, without mother, without descent [i. e. independent "of his descent] having neither beginning of days, nor end "of life [as to his priesthood;] but being made like unto "the Son of God, abideth a priest continually."—Vide Macknight's very clear illustration of this passage, in his View and Illustration prefixed to this chapter. "Like Melchizedek, Christ is a king as well as a priest, being the Son of God and Lord of all. He is also king of righteousness, to promote which is the object of his moral government. He is also king of peace, reconciling sinners to God, and to one another. Like Melchizedek, Christ is not descended from parents who were priests, but derives his priesthood from the special designation of God, independent of all limitations of descent; and his priesthood is of a nature so excellent as to have no companion nor successor in it, but he liveth for ever to execute it himself. Like Melchizedek, Christ's priesthood did not, as that of the Levites, begin at thirty and end at fifty years; but he exercised it from the first, and retains it through his whole existence. And finally, like Melchizedek, he acts as priest, not for one particular nation, but for all the true worshippers of God."

"Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people "received the Law) what further need was "there that another priest should rise after the "order of Melchizedek, and not be called after "the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being "changed, there is made of necessity a change "also of the Law *." For the full illustration of this argument, I refer to the learned commentators who have explained the passages in which it is contained: the conclusion thus stated by the Apostle is evidently contained in the Scriptures, and is that which I wish to impress, as it proves the consistency and illustrates the connexion of the Mosaic and the Christian codes.

With equal clearness the same great Apostle argues † from the very nature of the Levitical Law, that it was intended as the type and introduction of the Christian scheme; and here again adduces the prophetic declaration of the inspired Psalmist: "The Law having a shadow of good "things to come, and not the very image of the "things ‡, can never with those sacrifices which "they

* Heb. vii. 11, 12. † Heb. x. 1—10.

‡ "The Law having a shadow of good things to come, "and not the very image of the things." On these words it is remarked, "The word εἰκόνα rendered "image," seems from the tenour of the Apostle's argument, to be used for the essential or substantial form of a thing, i. e. for the very thing

" they offered year by year continually, make the
" comers thereunto perfect. For then would they
" not have ceased to be offered; because that the
" worshippers once purged, should have had no
" more conscience of sins. But in those sacri-
" fices there is a remembrance again made of sins
" every year. For it is not possible that the
" blood of bulls and of goats should take away
" sins. Wherefore, when *he* [*the promised Re-*
deemer

thing itself, as opposed to its σκια "shadow or delineation;" so it is paralleled to σῶμα "the body or substance," which the Apostle elsewhere opposes in like manner to its σκια or "shadow," Col. ii. 17. Accordingly the Syriac version explains εἰχόνα by the "*substance*," and Chrysostom by the "truth or reality" as opposed to "types or emblems." Cicero has used almost the same expression in the same sense: "Nos veri juris germanæ justitiæ solidam et expressam "effigiem nullam tenemus, umbra et imaginibus utimur." De Officiis, lib. iii. c. xvii. The Apostle means to illustrate the imperfection of the Law, that it could not bring men to perfection, that the good things it promised were but a shadow of the great realities secured by Christ, the veriest sketch or outline, in comparison of the perfect and exact picture. Vide Dodd, Macknight, Heylin, and Wolfius on Heb. x. 1. and Suicer's Thesaurus, and Parkhurst on the word Εἰχων.—It is necessary to remark, that in the words "a body hast thou prepared me," the Apostle follows the Septuagint, and not the Hebrew text as it now stands. But for the probability of a corruption in the Hebrew text, consult Dr. Thomas Randolph's comparison of the citations in the New Testament, with the Hebrew and the Septuagint, No. 159. pp. 22 & 44. and the authors by him referred to.

deemer predicted by the Psalmist in the fortieth Psalm] cometh into the world, he saith, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but "a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt-"offerings and sacrifices for sin, thou hast had "no pleasure: Then said I, Lo, I come (in the "volume of the book it is written of me) to do "thy will, O God. Above, when he said, Sacri-"fice, and offering, and burnt-offerings, and "offering for sin, thou wouldest not, neither "hadst thou pleasure therein (which are offered "by the Law) Then said he, Lo, I come to do "thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, "that he may establish the second. By the "which will we are sanctified, through the of-"fering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

Here again I refer my readers to the writings of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, for a full exposition of the accurate harmony and inseparable connexion between the two dispensations. It is not consistent with the plan of this Work (already extended beyond my orignal intention) to discuss the subject at large. I only wish very briefly to prove, that the Prophets who lived under the Mosaic Law, foresaw its abrogation, and acknowledged it was intended to introduce the Gospel scheme, to which, as more perfect and universal, it was destined to give place; while on the other hand, the inspired preachers of the Gospel

Gospel refer to the Mosaic institutions, as intended to prefigure and prepare for the Gospel of Christ, who came "not to destroy, but to fulfil the Law and the Prophets."

I shall close the series of proofs on this head, by the clear and explicit declaration of the Prophet Jeremiah *, which is also appealed to by the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

This Prophet foretels the propagation of a pure and spiritual religion, the abolition of legal ordinances, the call of the Gentiles, and the final restoration of Israel. Calling upon "back-sliding Israel" to return from her transgressions and idolatries, the Prophet encourages their repentance by declaring, "I will give you pastors ac-
"cording to mine heart, which shall feed you
"with knowledge and understanding. And it
"shall come to pass when ye be multiplied and
"increased in the land, in those days, saith the
"Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the
"covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come
"to mind; neither shall they remember it;
"neither shall they visit it; neither shall that
"be done any more. At that time they shall
"call Jerusalem the Throne of the Lord; and
"all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the
"name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall
"they

* Compare Jerem. iii. 15 to 18. and xxxi. particularly ver. 31 to 34. with Heb. x. 15.

"they walk any more after the imagination of "their evil heart. In those days the house of "Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, "and they shall come together out of the land "of the north, to the land that I have given for "an inheritance to their fathers *." And still more expressly in a subsequent chapter, "Behold, "the days come, saith the Lord, that I will "make a new covenant with the house of Israel, "and with the house of Judah: Not according to "the covenant that I made with their fathers, in "the day that I took them by the hand to bring "them out of the land of Egypt (which my cove-"nant they brake, although I was an husband "unto them, saith the Lord:) But this shall be "the covenant that I will make with the house of "Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I "will put my Law in their inward parts, and "write it in their hearts; and will be their God, "and they shall be my people. And they shall "teach no more every man his neighbour, and "every man his brother, saying, Know ye the "Lord; for they shall all know me, from the "least of them to the greatest of them, saith the "Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and will "remember their sin no more †." According to this prediction, the ancient Levitical covenant was to be dissolved, and the ordinances of Moses to

* Jerem. iii. 15—18. † Ib. xxxi. 31—34.

to be succeeded by a Law not in any degree typical, but entirely promotive of real virtue; not requiring ceremonies to preserve it, but in its very essence practical and influential, regulating the temper, and written in the heart.

PART III.

LECTURE VI.

SECT. II.

LECTURE VI.

SECT. II.—*The Law and the Prophets not only professedly designed to introduce the Gospel, but did in* FACT *prepare the way for it—Necessity of the Law as a preparation for the Gospel, shewn by considering the probable state of the world, if Judaism had never existed—Extreme difficulty of introducing true religion in such a state of mankind—Such universal degeneracy prevented by the Jewish dispensation—Proved by a brief view of the facts adduced in this Work—Adherence of the Jews to their Law, proves the reality of a providential interposition—The prophecies delivered by Moses on this subject prove the same—The Law was typical and figurative of the Gospel—Instances—The moral character of the Law prepared for the Gospel—The connexion of the two schemes shewn by various instances—The Jews employed as the immediate instruments for introducing the Gospel—Rejection of the Gospel by the mass of the Jewish nation does not disprove the connexion of the Law and the Gospel—Confirms the proof from prophecy—and from miracles.*

PART III.

LECT. VI.

SECT. II.

JUDAISM PREPARATORY TO CHRISTIANITY.

GALATIANS iii. 24.

"THE Law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ."

IN the last Section, I endeavoured to prove the consistency and the connexion of the Jewish and the Christian schemes, by adducing passages from the Law and the Prophets, shewing that Judaism was from the first intended to introduce that Messiah "in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed;" that the Jewish Lawgiver himself intimated that God would raise up another Prophet like unto himself, and consequently a Lawgiver, with authority to promulgate a *new Law;* and that the Prophets expressly foretold that the Mosaic ritual was to give place to a new religion of a perfectly spiritual kind, and calculated to embrace all the nations of the earth; declaring all this with increasing clearness, as the

era

era of this great change approached. While on the other hand, our Lord and his Apostles expressly refer to those predictions, as plainly pointing out the approach, describing the character, and establishing the divine original, of the Gospel. I now proceed to evince, that as the Law and the prophets were thus avowedly designed to predict and introduce the Gospel of Christ; so they did *in fact accomplish this design*, their preexistence being indispensably necessary to prepare for the reception of that Gospel, and in a variety of ways illustrating its importance and facilitating its promulgation.

To place this conclusion in a clear light, let us reflect what would probably have been the situation of mankind, as to religion and morality, if *no such nation* or system as *the Jewish had existed*, before the appearance of our Lord. It seems certain that the whole world would have been sunk in the most gross idolatry, and an almost total ignorance of the principles of natural religion *. The very idea of the Supreme Creator and Ruler of the universe would have been obliterated from the minds of men; or at most, thought of only by a few speculative philosophers, who had

* Vide Vol. I. Part II. the entire Lect. I. and Lect. II. from p. 231 to 234: also this volume, Part III Lect. I sect. i. from p. 8 to 20; and Lect. II. sect. i. from p. 71 to 74.

had never ventured to inculcate the necessity of confining adoration to the one true God, or openly to condemn the absurdities and profanations of idolatry, which would have prevailed over the world uncensured, we may almost say unsuspected of error or depravity; since no purer system would have existed, to which an appeal might have been made, as clearly true, or supported by any acknowledged authority.

In such a state of religious blindness all expectations of a future retribution would have appeared ridiculous or incredible, from the falsehoods and extravagancies with which that opinion had been universally encumbered and disgraced. The evidence from *prophecy* could not have existed; and any appeal to *miracles* would have been disregarded or discredited, from the multitude of lying wonders which had usurped that name, without a single instance of any plainly supernatural interposition.

Had the world been permitted to sink thus universally into ignorance, idolatry and depravity; almost deprived of all ideas of true religion, and totally estranged from every feeling of pure morality; without any fixed principles to recur to on these subjects, nay almost without a language in which to speak of them; it seems nearly impossible to conceive any means by which mankind could have been instructed or reformed, without

utterly subverting the whole course of nature, and forcibly controlling the moral character of man. Darkness would have overspread the earth, and thick darkness the nations; and amidst this universal moral chaos, no spot could have been found, on which the foundation of the church of God could have been laid; no nation or tribe or family, who, if the standard of true religion were reared, could be expected to rally round it and support the sacred cause.

A degeneracy so fatal and irremediable was effectually prevented by the operation of the Jewish scheme. It has appeared in the progress of this Work, that when the world was rapidly sinking into idolatry with all its profanations and crimes, the pure principles of that patriarchal religion which had originally enlightened mankind, were preserved in the family of Abraham by the transmission of parental instruction, until that family became a nation *: that then this nation, which would otherwise have been hurried away by the resistless torrent of universal corruption, was placed under the immediate government of Jehovah, as their national Lord and King †; rescued from Egypt and settled in Canaan, by a series of miraculous interpositions, which exhibited an irrefragable proof of the power, the providence,

* Vide Vol. I. from 182 to 201. † Ib. 259 to 261.

providence, and the majesty of the true God, as well as the impotence and nullity of those base idols who usurped his honour in a deluded world *.

To preserve this nation as a lasting monument of the divine supremacy, and a permanent asylum, where the truths of religion and the principles of morals might take refuge, and be preserved for a more favourable period, when their salutary influence might be again extended to all mankind with effect, by the promised Messiah, "in whom all nations were to be blessed," the Mosaic Law was given; which, in this infancy of human reason and human virtue, was to act as the "schoolmaster to bring men to Christ;" a task which it effected by a variety of means which can here be only briefly hinted at.

First it maintained the radical principles of true theology †; while it clothed them in such a form, and promulgated them in such circumstances, as, without detracting in the slightest particular from their purity and truth, rendered them interesting and attractive to a nation, which could scarcely have been induced to attend to any mere abstract doctrines concerning the being and attributes of the Deity, if he had not authorized them to look up to Him as their peculiar, national and guardian God.

The

* Vide supra, p. 84. † Vide Vol. I. Part II. Lect. I. p. 181.

The same Law inculcated the principles of pure morality, with a similar attention to the feelings and the character of the Jewish nation *; enforcing the entire system by temporal sanctions †, which alone were capable of influencing a people, short-sighted, incredulous, attached to present objects, and habituated from the example of the rest of mankind, to consider temporal prosperity and success as the criterion of the power and fidelity of that God, who allowed them to consider him as their national and peculiar Lord and King.

Such a system could be carried into effect only by a particular Providence ‡ proportioning the visible prosperity both of the state and of individuals, to their obedience to the divine Law. The continued display of this wonderful providential interference supplied a perpetually increasing proof of the power, the justice, and the mercy, of Jehovah; and exhibited the most awful and instructive examples to mankind, of the general conduct of God's moral government §.

The Mosaic Law not only promulgated a system of true religion and pure morality, and supported that

* Vide Vol. I. Part II. Lect. II. III. & IV.

† Vide supra, Part III. Lect. III. sect. i. p. 154 & seq. and sect. ii. p. 172 to 182.

‡ Vide supra, Part III. Lect. II. the entire.

§ Vide the last Lecture; also, Part III. Lect. III. sect. i. from p. 159 & seq.

that system by the most powerful sanctions; but it guarded it from the contagion of that idolatry and vice which universally prevailed, by a corresponding system of peculiar Laws and manners, rites and ceremonies, calculated to form a barrier between the chosen people and the idolatrous world*: while by the multitude of its rites, the magnificence, first of the sanctuary, and afterwards of the temple, the solemnity and attraction of its festivals, and finally by the influence of the Priests and Levites, who were set apart as the public instructors of the nation in morals and religion, it supplied the means of counteracting the attractions of idolatry.

Further, the Mosaic institution combining the civil government, the national religion, the tenure of private property, and the regulations of domestic life in one connected scheme†; all whose parts tended to one object, the permanence of the entire system: It effectually secured that object, notwithstanding the crimes and errors of the chosen people, their idolatries and apostasies both private and public, which no system of moral government could totally prevent; amidst the powerful temptations from without, and the wrong

* Vide Vol. I. Part I. Lect. VI. and Part II. Lect. II. III. IV.

† Ib. Part I. Lect. IV. and Part II. Lect. II. III. IV.

wrong propensities from within, necessarily arising from the general state of the world, and the peculiar character of the Jewish people, during the entire period from Moses to Christ.

If it be objected, that nothing but a pure and spiritual worship is worthy of God, and that the combination of moral precepts with ritual observances was inconsistent and incredible; I would answer, with a late ingenious writer, that the natural progress of human improvement had not yet brought any nation of the earth, perhaps, certainly not the Israelites, to the capacity of a worship purely spiritual. To this fact their early history gives ample evidence. But if they could have been formed to it, such a worship, consisting in pious sentiments, and the natural, spontaneous, and unprescribed expressions of them, would not have formed a more proper test for the purpose of exhibiting a proof by way of specimen of the moral government of God, than pure moral merit would have been; it would have been equally difficult to ascertain the reality and purity of either; the one would have been as latent and unobservable as the other; either of them would have required a penetration, attention, and comprehension of mind, which men do not acquire either early, or easily, but only with care and exertion, and after numerous successive generations; and both of them would have been greatly

debased in the measure of their worth, by such a connexion, by being placed in such a relation to a national, temporal, external prosperity. For these and various other reasons, the test by which the distribution of national good or evil should be regulated, ought not to have been in a purely spiritual worship alone: it was wiser to place it in an external ritual.

But we are still to view this scheme in another light, clearly illustrative of its divine original, as introductory to the Gospel. And here we must observe, that the chief rites and festivals of the Mosaic ritual were not only calculated to commemorate the leading interpositions of God, in the deliverance and settlement of the nation, and to exclude the infection of idolatry *; but that they had a prospective signification, and were clearly typical and figurative of the Messiah's character and kingdom †.

This

* Vide Vol. I. p. 160 et seq.

† This typical significance of Judaism has been fully and learnedly expounded by the Rev. Samuel Mather, a clergyman of Dublin, in a quarto volume published in 1683, entitled, The Figures and Types of the Old Testament, &c. Consult particularly *the Gospel of the perpetual Types*, p. 208 to 218; also, the Gospel of the Sacrifices and Offerings, p. 232 to 254; and the Gospel of the Jewish Festivals, from 520 to 545. See also the learned Mr. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, book ii. sect. ii. "On the Connexion between Judaism and

This typical character of the ritual Law has been illustrated by so many eminent writers, and, above all, has been so clearly established by the great Apostle of the Gentiles, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that I need only touch on it; and observe, that the whole system of bloody sacrifices, which had plainly preceded the Mosaic institutions, and leads us, when tracing its origin to the very earliest revelations of God to man *, as it served to awaken in the minds of the offerers a strong sense of the danger of sin, and the punishment it merited, even unto death; so it most evidently prefigured that great sacrifice, by which Christians "are sanctified, through the offering of the body "of Jesus Christ once for all †."

This prefiguration of the Messiah is peculiarly remarkable in the ceremonies observed in the great day of atonement ‡, when "the High Priest "entered once a year into the Holy of Holies, "not without blood, which he offered for himself, "and

* Vide Dr. Magee's work on Atonement and Sacrifice, Sermon II. with the notes.

† Heb. x. 10.

‡ Vide Lev. xvi. with Heb. ix. & x. the twenty-two first verses; Dr. Magee, from p. 67 to 69; and Outram ut supra.

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and Christianity by means of Types," vol. ii. p. 40 to 173; also, the learned Outram de Sacrificiis, particularly lib. i. cap. xviii. and lib. ii. cap. vii.; also, Hartley on the Truth of Christianity, Propos. 30, 31, 32 & 33.

"and for the errors of the people, being (says the "Apostle to the Hebrews) the figure of him, who "by his own blood entered in once* into the holy "place, having obtained eternal redemption for "us:" a redemption which, as the Apostle explains, essentially implies "a purification of the "conscience from dead works to serve the living "God."

Of the three great festivals of the Jewish Law, two, the Passover, and the feast of Pentecost, as they were *commemorative* of the deliverance from Egypt, and the promulgation of the Law on Sinai; so were they as clearly *figurative* of the sacrifice of Christ, and the effusion of the Spirit by which the Gospel was disseminated over the world †.

The

* Compare Heb. ix. 12 and 25.

† The analogy between the Paschal Sacrifice and our Lord's suffering, between the delivery of the Law and the effusion of the Holy Spirit, has been remarked from the earliest period of the Gospel. But it has not, as far as I can recollect, been noticed by any, that our not having as yet discovered any event in the history of Christianity, corresponding to that commemorated in the Feast of Tabernacles, or any Christian festival similar to that feast; instead of supplying an instance of dissimilitude between the two systems, strongly confirms their perfect analogy, when we consider the further progress of the Gospel, which the word of prophecy leads us to expect.

This observation has been suggested to me by my learned friend the Rev. Dr. Elrington, late Fellow (now Provost) of

The Jewish Law not only prepared for the introduction of the Gospel, by its types and prophecies,

of Trinity College Dublin; and who, in the course of sermons he preached and published as Donnellan's Lecturer, in the year 1796, has so ably illustrated the truth of the Gospel miracles, and exposed the sophistry of Hume. As his ideas on the present topic appear to me both original and just, I annex his own statement of them.

"That the Jews annually observed three great festivals "at Jerusalem, and that two of them, the Passover and the "Feast of Pentecost, had a reference to events which were "to happen under the Christian dispensation, is well known. "Hence we are led to consider, whether the third solem- "nity was of a similar nature, and has received a similar "completion. This was the Feast of Tabernacles, begin- "ning on the fifteenth day of the seventh month; when for "seven days all that were Israelites born were to dwell in "booths, in remembrance of their dwelling in booths when "they were brought out of the land of Egypt, and on the "eighth day to return to their houses, celebrating it with "great rejoicings. Levit. xxiii. 34, 35, 36. 42, 43.

"Now it is evident, that no circumstance attending the "establishment of Christianity had any resemblance to the "journey through the wilderness, and the dwelling there "under tents; nor has any attempt, I believe, been made "to prove a similarity of the sort. We must therefore "either admit, that this Feast of Tabernacles differs from "the others, in having no prospective reference; or we must "seek in some future event its completion or antitype. And "it will probably incline us to this latter opinion, when we "consider, that the Jews will undoubtedly be brought back "to Judæa when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be come "in;

phecies, and by preserving the principles of sound theology and pure morals, which, without it, would probably have been almost irrecoverably banished from

" in; and if we suppose the season of the Feast of Taber-
" nacles to coincide with that of their future return, as it
" appears to have done with their return from the Baby-
" lonish Captivity, we shall have a fulfilment of the three
" Jewish festivals completed finally in the conversion of the
" Jews to Christianity; which, with their return to their own
" land, will furnish a perpetual cause for thanksgiving and
" religious observance.

" Of the reference of this festival to the final restoration
" of the Jews, some of their traditions and practices may
" perhaps afford a further confirmation. It was their custom
" on the last day of the feast, to bring water from the
" fountain of Siloah, which the priests poured on the altar,
" singing the words of Isaiah, ch. xii. ver. 3. *With joy shall*
" *ye draw water from the fountain of salvation;* which words
" the Targum interprets, *With joy shall ye receive a new doc-*
" *trine from the elect of the just;* and they appear, from the
" preceding chapter, to relate to the final restoration of the
" Jews. The feast itself was also called HOSANNA, *save we*
" *beseech thee;* and was the time when our Lord spoke the
" remarkable words mentioned in St. John, ch. vii. ver. 37, 38.
" marking the relation which the ceremony of pouring out
" the water bore to his ministry. And amongst the tradi-
" tions of the Jews we find, that the defeat of Gog and Ma-
" gog shall fall out upon the Feast of Tabernacles, or that
" the consequent seven months cleansing of the land (Ezek.
" ch. xxxix. ver. 12.) shall terminate at that period, and
" there seems little reason to doubt the reference of that
" prophecy to the final restoration of the Jews."

from the earth: but by the strictness of its moral prohibitions, and its denunciations of God's displeasure against sin, it probed and exposed the moral maladies of man. It proved to him, by decisive experience, his proneness to violate the commands of his God, even when most distinctly promulgated, and his culpable neglect of duties of the most obvious necessity; so that he could not but acknowledge how infinitely improbable it was, that he could by his own unassisted strength escape sin; and that consequently, far from being able to claim eternal happiness, as a reward which human merit might challenge from divine justice, he was liable to condemnation and punishment.

Thus the Law prepared men to hail with fervent gratitude the glad tidings of the Gospel of peace, which offers the aid of the divine Spirit to assist the weakness of those who will humbly implore and diligently improve it; and proclaims free pardon to all, who, repenting of their sins, and acknowledging their own inability to escape from their power, or expiate their guilt, embrace with faith and joy those gracious terms of pardon and acceptance, offered by the mediation of that Jesus, "who was delivered for their offences, and raised again for their justification*;" who "still liveth to make intercession for us†:" thus "destroying the

* Rom. iv. 25. † Heb. vii. 25.

the power of death *," and "bringing life and immortality to light †." Not that in the Gospel the doctrine of a resurrection and a future retribution was *first* promulgated (for they were intimated by Moses, and clearly taught by the Prophets) but because the *means of securing life and immortality were then first clearly and satisfactorily ascertained* ‡, and placed within the reach of all who would

* Heb. ii. 14. † 2 Tim. i. 10.

‡ I am aware that commentators in general interpret this verse (2 Tim. i. 10.) solely of the Gospel's bringing to light the *doctrine* of life and immortality; and Warburton advances as an irrefutable argument, that as it was reserved to be so brought to light by the Gospel, it must have been unknown under the Old Testament. Now as I think I have proved it was not unknown under the Old Testament (vide supra, Part III. Lect. IV.) it follows it was not reserved to be brought to light by the Gospel alone. Undoubtedly, where the Jewish religion was unknown, the doctrine was first clearly promulgated by the Gospel; and even amongst the Jews it was supported by such additional miracles and examples, as threw round it a brightness of conviction, compared with which, the assent previously yielded to it was doubtful and dim. So that this expression may bear the sense usually given it, without supporting the inference which Warburton would deduce from it. But I cannot but think the Apostle meant to express much more than a bare promulgation of the *doctrine* of life and immortality. He encourages his beloved son in the Gospel to perseverance in the faith, for which he himself cheerfully sustained persecution and bonds; and for this purpose he describes in the strongest terms the blessedness of

would embrace the gracious offers of pardon and mercy held out by the Redeemer of man.

Such

of a true Christian's temper, views and hopes. "God (says "he) hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and "of love, and of a sound mind," i. e. strength to resist evil, derived from the assistance of the Holy Spirit; accompanied with a sincere and active love of God, and a just discrimination of things, which clearly recognizes the superiority of future and heavenly objects above present and sensual: thus comprehensively describing a perfect Christian, whose will is rectified, whose affections are purified, and whose understanding is spiritually enlightened. To attain or preserve such a character is the most glorious object of human ambition; "Be not thou therefore (says the Apostle) ashamed of "the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but "be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according "to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us "with an holy calling, not according to our works, but ac- "cording to his own purpose, and grace, which was given "us in Christ Jesus, before the world began, but is now "made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus "Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life "and immortality to light through the Gospel: where- "unto I am appointed a Preacher, and an Apostle, and a "Teacher of the Gentiles." Now is it not evident that the Apostle here means to unfold the whole scheme of the Gospel, the eternal purpose of God to admit in the fulness of time the Gentiles into his church, notwithstanding their antecedent idolatries and crimes; the abolition of death, by depriving it of its terrors and its sting, and redeeming men from the power of death eternal; and aid to secure eternal life, arising from that spirit of power and love

and

Such is the strict unity of design and the accurate harmony of parts, between the Jewish and the Christian schemes, so clearly establishing their common and heavenly original *. As the period approached when the promised Messiah was to appear, we have seen this unity and harmony display itself in more illustrious characters. The visible and immediate interference of Providence

* Vide Hartley on the Truth of Christianity, Propos. 26, 35, 36, 37, 38.

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and religious wisdom, with which divine grace supplies the true Christian? It is not then the simple promulgation of the doctrine of a future life, which the Apostle here understands, but a promulgation of it, accompanied with such clear instruction how to seek, and such merciful assistance to obtain life and immortality, as were now first brought to light by the Gospel. "Thus," to adopt the words of the pious Doddridge, "hath Jesus Christ in effect "abolished death, hath deposed it from its tyrannical empire, "and thrown a light on the important doctrine of life and "immortality by the Gospel, which gives us a more express "assurance and a more lively view of it, than any former "dispensation had ever done or could possibly do."—Vide also Parkhurst's exposition of this passage, as quoted by Dodd in loc.; Bishop Sherlock's opinion in opposition to Warburton, illustrated and vindicated by Dr. Parry in his defence of the Bishop of London; and the judicious Benson, in his paraphrase and notes on this passage, who admits "the Jews had expectations of a resurrection even before "the coming of our Saviour," and refers to Matt. xxii. 32. and Dan. xii. 2.; "but the more full and clear discovery is "owing to the Christian Revelation."

dence in rewarding virtue and punishing vice, seems to have been gradually withdrawn from amongst the Jews after the Babylonish Captivity*; and the expectations of a future retribution, now plainly † and authoritatively established by their sacred writers, left to operate in its room; so that at the time of our Lord's appearance, these expectations were a leading article of the popular creed; and when promulgated anew with additional miracles, to impress them on mankind in general, found amongst the Jews minds prepared to receive them, wherever worldly views or vicious propensities did not resist and defeat the influence of truth.

Thus also the gracious intention of Providence, to admit the heathen world into the church, and for this purpose abrogate that ritual which formed the wall of separation excluding them, was gradually more plainly notified ‡; until by the last Prophets it was distinctly announced; and as we perceive, clearly understood by all, whom national pride and prejudice did not induce to close their eyes against the light. Of this we find signal instances in John the Baptist and the devout Cornelius;

* Vide Warburton, book iv. sect. iv.; 1 Maccabees, ii. 38. and vi. from 49 to 60.

† Vide supra, Part III. Lect. IV. particularly sect. i.

‡ Vide the first Section of this Lecture.

Cornelius; and certainly there were multitudes of others amongst the Jews and Gentiles, who like them looked for salvation by the appearance of that Messiah, "who was to be a light to lighten "the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel;" and we know that the whole nation of the Samaritans acknowledged the same truth.

As this glorious era drew near, we see various events crowding on our observance preparatory to its arrival; the translation of the Jewish Scriptures into Greek; the general expectation of a great king to arise in Judæa, diffused over the East; the increasing light of philosophy; the extension of the Roman empire; all combine to prepare for and facilitate the promulgation of the Gospel. But still the Jews are the more immediate instruments whom God meant to employ in effecting his gracious purposes; and accordingly we find that after the Babylonish Captivity, they are rapidly prepared to act their part in the great and important change which now approached.

It is certain that in the interval between the Babylonish Captivity and the advent of the Messiah, the Jews were gradually settled and multiplied, not only in Egypt, but in all Asia, Greece, Italy, and the western regions of Europe. The Jewish Historian cites numerous decrees of the magistrates, the senate, and the emperors of

Rome, encouraging and protecting them*. Julius Cæsar ordered that tables of brass, containing his decrees to this effect, should be fixed up in the Capitol, and communicated to the quæstors and prætors where the Jews resided. We find similar decrees formed by, or directed to, the governors and people of Ephesus, Sardis and Miletus, Athens and Pergamus, as well as the islands of the Ægean Sea: and we have the most decided classical authorities† to prove the multitude of the

* Vide Josephus' Antiquities, Book iv. ch. x. where extracts from the original decrees are given; also book xvi. ch. ii. and xix. ch. v.: also, Lardner's Credibility, Part i. book ii. ch. ii. & iii.

† Vide Horat. Sat. lib. i. sat. ix. line 69, 70, & 71; and still more expressly, sat. iv. line 140.

Multa poëtarum veniet manus, auxilio quæ
Sit mihi (nam multò plures sumus) ac veluti
Judæi, cogemus in hanc concedere turbam.

And sat. v. line 100, where the "credat Judæus Apella" is used as a proverbial expression, opposed to the incredulity of the Epicureans. The sarcasm of Persius, sat. v. 184,

Recutitaque sabbata palles,

equally shews the prevalence of the Jewish opinions. Vide also Martial's Epigram, lib. iv. 4: "Jejunia sabbatariorum," &c.; and various passages of Juvenal, sat. iii. line 13, sat. vi. 158 and from line 541 to 546, and particularly sat. xiv. from 95 to 105.—Vide also Lardner's Credibility, Part I. book i. ch. ii. on the State of the Jews in Judæa, which gives also much information on the general state of the nation in Egypt and

the Jews at Rome, the number of their proselytes, and the popularity of their opinions.

As the Jews were thus dispersed and situated, so that they might most generally spread their opinions, there is also reason to believe that their general character and conduct, especially in heathen countries, were such as to recommend them; they seem in general to have been humble and rational, peaceable and industrious. "Natural "justice (says their Historian) is most to the "advantage of all men equally, Greeks and Bar- "barians, to which our Laws have the greatest "regard; and thereby render us, if we abide in "them after a pure manner, benevolent and "friendly to all men; on which account we have "reason to expect the like return from others, and "to inform them that they ought not to esteem "difference of positive institutions, a sufficient "cause of alienation, but join with us in the pur- "suit of virtue and probity *."

By this providential distribution and settlement of the Jews in almost every part of the civilized world, they were every where to be found carrying with

and elsewhere; but especially his second chapter, on the State of the Jews out of Judæa.—Vide also Tacitus Annal. lib. ii. cap. lxxxv.; Suetonius Vita Tiberii, cap. xxxvi.

* Vide similar sentiments in the conclusion of the second book against Apion: and Antiquities, book iv. ch. viii.

with them their Law and their Prophets, establishing their synagogues, celebrating their sabbaths, bearing constant testimony to the unity, the supremacy, and the providence of God, in opposition to Pagan superstition and idolatry; and numbers of them declaring their firm belief in a future state of retribution; while all maintained a constant connexion with Jerusalem, attended there at the three great festivals, whenever it was practicable, sent thither their pious and charitable contributions, and universally gloried in the expectation of that Messiah, "who was to be a light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as "the glory of his people Israel."

The influence of such a preparation for the reception and diffusion of the Gospel, must have been great and salutary: every where its preachers found synagogues, where the Law and the Prophets were expounded each sabbath; every where they found not only Jews, but proselytes of righteousness, who, without binding themselves under the heavy yoke of the Mosaic ritual, acknowledged the great truths of natural religion, and complied with the sacred precepts of the moral Law; every where some, like the officer of Candace queen of Ethiopia*, studied the Scriptures; others there were like the devout Cornelius †, who "feared God, with all

* Acts viii. 27, &c. † Ibid. x.

all his house, and gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway." Hence the preachers of Christianity almost every where instantly found hearers, who could understand and feel their addresses. Thus at Antioch in Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas were invited to preach by the rulers of the synagogue; and after the Jews went out of it, "the Gentiles and religious proselytes besought "that these words might be preached to them "the next sabbath: and on that day came almost "the whole city together to hear the word of "God *." Thus also at Iconium, when these Apostles went to the synagogue, they found an audience not only of Jews but of Gentiles (who were undoubtedly such proselytes;) and "when "they had preached, a multitude both of Jews "and Greeks believed †." Thus again at Thessalonica, "of the Jews some believed, and of the "devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the "chief women not a few ‡." And finally we see that "at Jerusalem were dwelling Jews, devout "men, out of every nation under heaven;" who were attracted by the very first sound of the Gospel of Christ, for when the Apostles "were "filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak "with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them "utterance,

* Acts xiii. 15. 42 & 44. † Ibid. xiv. 1.

‡ Ibid. xvii. 1—4.

"utterance, the multitude came together, and
"were confounded, because that every man heard
"them speak in his own language; Parthians,
"and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in
"Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia,
"in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia,
"in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cy-
"rene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and Prose-
"lytes, Cretes and Arabians, exclaimed, We
"do hear them speak in our tongues the wonder-
"ful works of God*."

Of this assembly, which may be considered as a collective representation of all the nations of the earth, three thousand souls converted on this memorable day, and at least five thousand† on a second illustrious miracle within a few days after, formed a body of missionaries, to bear to their respective countries the tidings of the appearance of that promised Messiah, "in whom all the kindreds of the earth were to be blessed:" a promise which in these signal instances began to be so conspicuously verified.

The rejection of Christianity by the great bulk of the Jewish nation, assuredly forms no valid objection to the connexion and consistency of the Law and the Gospel‡. This rejection was not

* Acts ii. 4—11. † Ibid. iv. 4.

‡ I refer for a full refutation of the objection against the truth of the Gospel history, derived from the rejection of Christianity

not obscurely intimated by the Prophets *, was expressly predicted by our Lord †; and was the natural consequence of that national ambition, that carnal and worldly temper, which induced the great bulk of the Jewish people to misunderstand and misinterpret the prophecies, by directing their attention exclusively to those predictions which speak of the supremacy and extent of the Messiah's kingdom, and which they understood of a temporal instead of a spiritual reign, by which the Jewish nation, as they vainly imagined, was to be rescued from the Roman yoke, and exalted to the dominion of the world; while they wilfully overlooked the equally clear ‡ predictions of the same Messiah's humiliation and sufferings, and the express declarations, that the new ‖ dispensation should not be confined to one chosen people, like the old, but should embrace without distinction all nations, who, according to the original promise

* Vide Doddridge's Lectures Lect. cxxx. Prop. 112.; Isaiah xlix. 16, 21. lii. the entire, liii. 1 to 9; and the passages quoted in the first section of this Lecture.

† Matt. xvi. 21. xxvi. 2. and the parallel passages.

‡ Vide particularly Psalm xxii. and Isaiah liii.

‖ Vide the preceding section of this Lecture.

Christianity by the Jews, to two Sermons lately preached in the chapel of Trinity College, by Dr. Elrington, and to be immediately published at the desire of the Provost and Senior Fellows. I have only taken such a brief view of it as my subject indispensably required.—Vide also Lardner's Collection of Jewish Testimonies, ch. ii. & vii.

promise of God to the great Patriarch Abraham, were to "be blessed in his seed." But the true interpretation and application of the prophecies is not obscured, or the proof of divine foreknowledge and co-operation in the establishment of the Gospel arising from them, subverted, by the errors or the obstinacy of the Jews. The prophecies are open to our inspection as well as theirs; and when, by combining the temporal humiliation with the spiritual dominion of the Messiah, both which the Gospel attests, we perceive all the predictions respecting him accomplished, however apparently opposite; the proof thence resulting is the more decisive, as it was more difficult for mere human sagacity to anticipate, or mere human agency to produce, so extraordinary a coincidence.

The rejection of the Gospel by the Jews is indeed so far from weakening, that it greatly confirms the proof from prophecy, by establishing the authenticity and uncorruptedness of these great records of divine truth, of which the Jews are unsuspected, because hostile vouchers. Had their nation universally or generally embraced the Gospel at its first publication, the sceptic might with some plausibility allege, that the *prophecies might have been fabricated or altered, to fit them to the events*; the CONTRARY IS NOW CERTAIN. And so great is the importance of this circumstance (as appears to me) to establish the truth of Christianity,

tianity, that I firmly believe it to be one of the great causes, why the national conversion of the Jews is delayed "until the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in *." They are to continue the guardians of the prophetic records till these shall have had their contents examined, and their application ascertained, by every other nation in the world.

A little reflection will also evince, that the rejection of Christianity by the Jewish nation does not subvert, but on the contrary confirms, the *certainty* of the *miracles* recorded in the Gospel history. It not only appears from that history †, but from the admission of the Jews themselves ‡, that the cotemporaries of these miracles did not deny their performance, but on the contrary admitted it; though they would not upon their evidence embrace the Gospel, because they conceived this contrary to the Mosaic Law, whose obligation their carnal and ambitious views led them to believe was eternal, and which they conceived no miracles could prove was abrogated ‖. They therefore contented themselves with asserting, that the

* Rom. xi. 25.

† Matt. ix. 34. xii. 24. Mark iii. 22. Luke xi. 15. and the corresponding passages.

‡ Vide Wagenseil's Tela Ignea Satanæ; and Lardner's Jewish Testimonies, ch. v. & vii.

‖ Vide Limborchi Collatio cum Orobio, 3 Script. Judæi, Num. iii. p. 131.

the miracles of Christ and his Apostles must be ascribed to magical influence, diabolical agency, or the mysterious potency of the ineffable name of God, which they conceived our Lord had learned to pronounce. But these opinions of the Jews affect not the reality or greatness of the Gospel miracles: we can judge as clearly as they could possibly do, whether the Scriptures describe the Mosaic Law as of strictly eternal obligation, or on the contrary represent it as designed to introduce a more perfect and universal religion; and our improved reason and philosophic knowledge reject without hesitation the wild and absurd causes to which they imputed works, which the fair and candid reasoners amongst themselves confessed, "no man could do, except God was with him."

In truth, the hostility of the Jewish nation to Christianity, from the first, confirms the truth of the Gospel miracles. Had the Jews been universally or even generally converted by them, the sceptic might argue with some appearance of probability, that the facts had been invented or exaggerated to gratify the national propensity, credited without examination or proof, and all inquiry into them checked, at the only period when inquiry could have detected imposition. On the contrary, we are now certain, that the Gospel miracles were wrought in the presence of

enemies *, and thus subjected to the severest scrutiny, and that they carried with them conviction to multitudes, notwithstanding the fiercest opposition which national prejudice, bigotry and vice could excite, and the strictest research which could be formed by the most vigilant hostility.

Undoubtedly the most powerful cause of the rejection of the Gospel by the Jews, was the deplorably vicious and depraved character of the nation at large, so strongly attested by their own historian, and incontrovertibly established by the facts which he relates †. And this depravity, it may be said, disproves every thing I have adduced to shew, that Judaism was designed or adapted to prepare for the reception of the Gospel. But let it be remembered, that notwithstanding this allowed depravity of the Jews in general, it has been proved ‡ that amongst them were preserved the principles of true theology and pure morals, which

* The Author begs leave to refer to a Work published by him in the year 1798, "*to prove the Apostles and Evangelists were not Enthusiasts*," for a detail of particular circumstances attending the Gospel miracles, chap. i. particularly sect. iv. and chap. ii. sect. i.

† Vide Josephus' History of the Jewish War, particularly books iv. v. & vi.; or Lardner's judicious view of his testimony to the fulfilment of our Lord's predictions, in his Jewish Testimonies, ch. iii.

‡ Vide supra, Part II.

which the Gospel adopts, and which were banished from all mankind beside. Let it be remembered, that amongst them and the various descriptions of persons connected with and enlightened by their religion, the Gospel found its first teachers and hearers, its first converts and missionaries; and that the noblest and purest principles of piety adorned these great instruments, employed by God for dispensing his mercies to mankind; instruments, which through every other region of the world would have been sought in vain. Finally, let us recollect the great probability, that the Gospel attracted, and as it were detached from the Jewish nation every thing pure and pious, candid and virtuous; and left behind the dregs and dross alone, the hypocritical Pharisees, the Epicurean Sadducees, the worldly-minded Herodians, the fierce zealots, the depraved and seditious rabble: thus, according to the intimation of its divine Founder, sifting the chaff from the wheat, separating the tares from the good seed, "gathering the one into his barn, and "consuming the other with fire unquenchable *."

In truth, after the Jewish nation had obstinately rejected the Messiah, rebelled against his authority, and in opposition to his religion maintained that the perpetual observance of the Mosaic ritual

* Matt. iii. 12. xiii. 30.

ritual was an indispensable condition of divine acceptance, and their own nation exclusively the chosen people of God; it was indispensably necessary to put an end to their national establishment, and destroy that temple with which the observance of their ritual was essentially connected, in order to maintain the universal sovereignty of the Messiah, in opposition to their rebellion, as well as to prevent all possibility of corrupting Christianity by the adoption of their errors, and of their now burthensome because useless ceremonies. Whoever observes the struggles of the Judaizing Christians thus to encumber the religion of Christ, and the extreme difficulty with which their efforts were resisted, even by direct revelation and Apostolic authority, in the very first and purest era of the church, will easily perceive the necessity of this precaution, to preserve the purity and extend the dominion of the Gospel; and that in this view, "through "the fall of the Jews, salvation is come unto "the Gentiles*."

* Romans xi. 11.

PART III.

LECTURE VII.

THE PAST AND PRESENT STATE OF THE JEWS EXHIBITS THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROPHECY.

LECTURE VII.

Evidence from Prophecy applicable to Judaism—Prophecy of Moses—As to the prosperity of the Jews as to the punishments they were to suffer—Considered in their variety—Their sources—Their duration—The face of their country—These predictions antecedent to the events—Clearly applicable to them—Not such as human wisdom or political sagacity would have dictated—Instanced in the three Jewish Feasts—The sabbatic year—The remoteness of their destroyers—The circumstances attending the destruction of Jerusalem—In their subsequent dispersion—In their present state and sufferings.

PART III.

LECT. VII.

THE PAST AND PRESENT STATE OF THE JEWS EXHIBITS THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROPHECY.

THE delivery and fulfilment of prophecy is so important an evidence of a divine authority, and so clear in the Mosaic revelation, that it has been justly considered a defect in this Work, that, in exhibiting the internal evidence for the divine origin of the Jewish religion, it did not advert, except very briefly and incidentally, to this species of proof. To supply this defect, it is intended in this and the next Lecture to exhibit a summary view of the leading prophecies which predict the fortunes of the chosen people of God; to point out their past accomplishment; consider what expectations, as to the future destiny of this singular people, these prophecies excite; and how far the present circumstances of their situation appear to coincide

with these expectations; and to indicate a providential arrangement of human affairs, even now visibly advancing to that great consummation, when, to use the language of the sublime and evangelic Isaiah, "it shall come to pass in "the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's "house shall be established in the top of the "mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; "and all nations shall flow unto it. And many "people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go "up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house "of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of "his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out "of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of "the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge "among the nations, and shall rebuke many peo-"ple: and they shall beat their swords into plow-"shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, "neither shall they learn war any more *."

The great prophecy describing most compendiously, but at the same time most clearly, the fortune of the house of Israel, is that pronounced by their inspired Lawgiver on his last address to the assembled tribes, at the close of their forty years journeying in the Wilderness, and before they had entered upon the land of their inheritance. On this solemn occasion, the Legislator assures the

* Isaiah ii. 2—4.

the assembled nation, " It shall come to pass, if " thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of " the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his " commandments which I command thee this " day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high " above all nations of the earth: and all these " blessings shall come upon thee, and overtake thee, " if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord " thy God *." The Lawgiver then enumerates every species of prosperity which could bless a people, in their persons, their goods, the fruit of their cattle, and the fruit of their ground: security from all enemies; " and all the people of the earth " shall see that thou art called by the name of " the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee:" security even from the apparently inevitable contingencies of unfavourable seasons, parching heats, or excessive rains, so common in such a climate; " The Lord shall open unto thee his good trea- " sure, (says the prophet) the heaven to give thee " rain into thy land in his season, and to bless all " the work of thine hand."

It is obvious to remark, how entirely unconnected are such blessings, as security from warlike enemies, and the enjoyment of rain from heaven, with the observance of a religious code; and how idle and unmeaning such promises would have appeared, to any people not deeply impressed, by immediate

* Deut. xxviii. the entire chap.

immediate and clear experience, with the conviction, that a supernatural power dictated, and would certainly execute, the promises thus held out. The sacred history records the enjoyment of such prosperity as is thus predicted, during that period of the Jewish state when the divine Law was most zealously observed, the latter part of the reign of David, and the entire reign of Solomon. But unhappily, the intervals of pious obedience and its attendant blessings have been far exceeded, as the prophetic Lawgiver foresaw, by the calamitous periods of disobedience and its attendant punishments. Let us then direct our attention to the nature and extent of these prophetic menaces, and observe their wonderful accomplishment.

The first circumstance which strikes the mind on reviewing these menaces, is their great extent and variety. There is no circumstance of distress, no aggravation of sorrow, applicable to the nation collectively, or to the individuals who compose it, which is not included in the prophetic denunciation: "It shall come to pass," says their Lawgiver to the Jewish nation, "if thou wilt not "hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, "to observe and do all his commandments, and "his statutes, which I command thee this day, "that all these curses shall come upon thee, and "overtake thee *." He then enumerates a fearful catalogue

* Deut. xxviii. 15 to the end.

catalogue of evils which should overwhelm them, in the city and in the field; on their persons by disease; in their property, whether the produce of their flocks, or of the earth: "The Lord (says he) "shall send upon thee vexation and rebuke, in all "that thou settest thine hand unto to do it, until "thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; "because of the wickedness of thy doings, where-"by thou hast forsaken me*."

Nor were their calamities to stop here; they were to be inflicted also by the operation of the elements, which, obedient to the will of the Great Jehovah, were to combine in punishing this rebellious race: "The pestilence, and the consump-"tion, the fever, and blasting, and mildew," were to pursue them until they should perish. "Thy "heaven (says the Prophet) that is over thy "head shall be brass, and the earth that is under "thee shall be iron; and the Lord shall make the "rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven "shall it come down upon thee, until thou be "destroyed." Even this was not yet the worst; their punishment was to be completed by the instrumentality of man; their enemies were to be resistless and destructive: "The Lord (says "their legislator) shall cause thee to be smitten "before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one "way

* Deut. xxviii. 20—24.

"way against them, and flee seven ways before "them: and shalt be removed into all the king-"doms of the earth." These enemies were not to be found only amongst their immediate neighbours, whose hostility might naturally be expected: "The Lord (says the Prophet) shall "bring a nation against thee from far, from the "end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a "nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; "a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not "regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to "the young*." A description so exactly correspondent, first to the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, and still more to the legions of Rome: "And he "shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy "high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou "trustedst, throughout all thy land." The miseries thus to be inflicted, it was foretold, should exceed in severity the ordinary measure of human calamities. Almost unparalleled sufferings from war and famine are predicted with an exactness, which the narrative of history, while it exactly accords with, cannot exceed: "Thou shalt eat "(says the prophet) the fruit of thine own body, "the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which "the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege, "and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies "shall distress thee." A prediction so dread-fully

* Deut. xxviii. 49 to the end.

fully verified at the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and still more dreadfully at its final destruction by the Romans.*

Another most signal feature in the prophetic picture, is the *universal* and *protracted* dispersion of the nation; the scorn and cruelty they were to experience in the various lands whither they were to go into captivity, and the keenness of their sensations under this maltreatment: "Ye shall "be plucked from the land whither thou goest to "possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among "all people from the one end of the earth even "unto the other; and among these nations thou "shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy "foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee "there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and "sorrow of mind: And thy life shall hang in doubt "before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, "and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In "the morning thou shalt say, Would to God it "were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would to "God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart "wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of "thine eyes which thou shalt see *."

Another circumstance in the manifestation of the divine displeasure against his offending people, more extraordinary still, if any thing can be more

* Deut xxviii. 63 to the end.

more extraordinary, is to be found in the signal and permanent alteration which God would produce in the face of the very country they were then preparing to inhabit, and the very nature of the soil they were about to cultivate, at the moment their Legislator invited them to go up and possess it, as being the land the Lord had promised their fathers, "a land flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands." He predicted, that if they despised the statutes, and departed from the worship of their God, that land should become barren and desolate to such a degree, says their Lawgiver, "that the generations "to come of their children, and the stranger that "shall come from a far land, when they shall see "the plagues of that land, that it is not sown, nor "beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the "overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, even all "nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done "thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of "this great anger? Then men shall say, Because "they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord "God of their fathers, made with them when he "brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: "For they went and served other gods: and the "Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, "and cast them into another land, as it is this "day *."

But

* Deut. xxix. 22—28.

But however severe and signal the chastisements of this wayward people, they were not to terminate in a final and irremediable destruction: "Yet for all that (says their God) when they be "in the land of their enemies I will not cast them "away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy "them utterly, and to break my covenant with "them: for I am the Lord their God*." Thus the divine truth is pledged for the perpetual preservation of some remnant at least of the Jewish race as a distinct people, however apparently dispersed and abandoned; and this promise has been hitherto accomplished during 3,000 years from its delivery, a duration of distinct existence unparalleled in the history of any other nation.

There are some circumstances necessary to establish the full force of the evidence by prophecy—even that the prediction preceded the event, and that it is accurately applicable to it—of which no possible doubt can in the present instance exist. The predictions of the Jewish Lawgiver were certainly delivered above 3,000 years ago; and they are as directly descriptive of the present desolation of Judæa, the present wide-spread dispersion and miserable sufferings of the Jews, and at the same time their preservation as a distinct nation, notwithstanding that dispersion and

* Levit. xxvi. 44.

and those sufferings, as any historical narrative is descriptive of the scenes which it relates.

It now remains to inquire, whether the particulars predicted can be supposed to have been predicted at hazard, and to have occurred in the common course of events, so as to preclude the necessity of a divine foreknowledge in the Prophet, and a providential arrangement in the event. This, it may be said, is not an improbable case; it is not difficult to conceive that these predictions may have been dictated by mere human sagacity, collecting from past experience the general causes which influence national prosperity or decay, and applying these principles to the particular situation and circumstances of the nation, whose fortunes the Lawgiver, who assumed the character of a prophet, wished to influence, by appearing to predict. And it may be urged, that instances of this kind are not wanting in history; even the lawgiver of Sparta employed a similar expedient, when he procured an oracle to sanction his laws, by declaring, that while the Spartans continued to obey them, they would be happy.

It might further be asserted, that if any man foretells the destruction of any city, or the ruin of any nation, as an event certainly to take place in the indefinite lapse of ages, it is highly probable the prediction would at some period be verified: And as all human institutions, whether civil or religious,

religious, are liable to degeneracy and abuse, and every people at some era of its history sinks into corruption; any man, assuming the character of a prophet, may foretel the ultimate destruction of any city or people, with a moral certainty that his prediction will be ultimately fulfilled; and he may assert this destruction will be the consequence of degeneracy and corruption, with little likelihood of his conjecture being falsified by the event: And what more, it will be asked, has been done by the Jewish Lawgiver?—To meet this objection, I shall now endeavour to prove that the tenor of the Mosaic prediction is so entirely different from the conclusions of political experience; and that the circumstances attending the Jewish nation, thus clearly foretold so many ages since, were in their own nature so singular as not to be within the common range of human conjecture, to this hour exhibiting phenomena unparalleled in the history of the world;—so as to indicate most clearly the interference of a special Providence controlling all events, and rendering them subservient to the purposes of its moral government, and the advancement of its religious dispensations.

Let us then impartially consider: Is not the distinction between the prophetic declarations of the Jewish Lawgiver, and the conjectures of mere political sagacity, clear and decided? The mere human statesman may, by long experience and acute

acute penetration, perceive the connexion in the state he contemplates, between the form of its government, the character of its laws, and the manners of its inhabitants; he may calculate the probable influence of all these causes on its military power; the stability of its constitution; its domestic tranquillity; its commercial exertion; its failure or success in agriculture; and various other circumstances on which the public prosperity of the state, and the private happiness of individuals, must materially depend. But the Jewish Lawgiver refers not to political causes: He does not tell his countrymen, that if they violate his agrarian law, they would overturn the balance of their government; that if they do not preserve their military enrolments, they cannot resist the attacks of their enemies: he does not warn them, that if they neglect agriculture and commerce, they would sink into poverty, or be exposed to famine: he does not exhort them to observe the progress of their neighbours in the art of war, and adopt their improvements: he does not caution them to study the subtleties of policy, and to cultivate the friendship of some of the adjoining states as a protection against the ambition of others; he displays no anxiety to rouse in them a spirit of military glory in order to secure them from invasion, or to refine them by literary pursuits in order to exalt their character: His cautions, his warnings, his coun-

sels, are all directed to this *single point*—their *obedience to the Great Jehovah.* "All these "things (says he) shall come upon you, if thou "wilt not observe to do all the words of this "law written in this book, that thou mayest fear "this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY "GOD *." Now it is remarkable, in this view of the subject, that many particulars of this law were, according to the usual maxims of human wisdom, directly hostile to the temporal greatness of the people. All the particularities of their ritual, of their peculiar food, of their singular customs, tended to exclude or to offend strangers, and thus impede commerce. They were forbidden to multiply horses †; and thus deprived of cavalry and chariots, a species of force so important. The assembly of all their adult males three times in the year at the place where the Lord chose to place his Name, necessarily left their frontiers as often exposed to every invader; and against this obvious and imminent danger their Lawgiver held out no security, but this assurance of their God, "I will "cast out the nations from before thee, and enlarge "thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy "land, when thou shalt go up to appear before "the Lord thy God thrice in the year‡." Thus also the observance of the sabbatical year, which required

* Deut. xxviii. 58. † Ib. xvii. 16.
‡ Exod. xxxiv. 24.

required them to leave their lands untilled every seventh year, seemed to expose them as often to the attacks of famine; against which their Lawgiver held out no security but the assurance of the same God, "I will command my blessing upon "you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth "fruit for three years *." No man will assert that any mere human sagacity could foresee that the neglect of either of these last precepts had naturally any tendency to hasten the ruin of the Jewish state, or prolong the captivity of the Jewish people; yet the Lawgiver in his prophetic denunciation lays particular stress on the last precept, relating to the sabbatical year, and affirms, that its violation would materially conduce to hasten the era and prolong the period of their captivity and their country's desolation: "I will "bring the land into desolation: and your enemies "which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. "And I will scatter you among the heathen, and "will draw out a sword after you: and your land "shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then "shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it "lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies land; "even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her "sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall "rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, "when ye dwelt upon it †." Thus this signal prophecy

* Levit. xxv. 21. † Ibid. xxvi. 32—35.

phecy connects events with causes which would seem, on the testimony of general experience, calculated to produce effects decidedly different from, or even directly contrary to, those which the prediction declares would take place; so that their accomplishment may be adduced as a proof, not only of a supernatural foresight displayed in predicting contingent, though ordinary, occurrences, but as an instance of special providential interference, regulating the fortunes of this extraordinary people so as to exhibit a decisive testimony of supernatural power directing and controlling all events to effect its eternal purposes.

Let us next examine whether, in the various calamities which befel the Jews, but especially in the final destruction of Jerusalem and dispersion of the nation, there were not a variety of circumstances of an extraordinary nature, whose concurrence forms a combination which no conjectures grounded on common experience could anticipate. Their Legislator knew they were to be *surrounded* by warlike and hostile nations, whom he foretells in other places would be employed as instruments for their correction; yet their final destruction he declares should be effected by a nation whom God would bring *from far*, even from the ends of the earth. Now this was strictly applicable to the

Romans,

Romans, who, with respect to the Jews, came almost from the remotest part of civilized Europe. And it has even been observed, that Vespasian and Adrian, the two great conquerors and destroyers of Judæa, both came from commanding the Roman legions *in Britain*, which, to the Jews, was nearly the very remotest known island of the western world. "A nation (their Lawgiver adds) whose language they should not understand;" a character improbable from the intermixture of dialects in the various Asiatic nations, but strictly true of the Romans; whose language, in its sound, its construction, and its written character, is to this day most different from the language of the Hebrews; a nation, he further describes, "of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young." This too was most strictly fulfilled by the Romans, who, though in general disposed to spare the nations they conquered, yet to the Jews, at the time of their final destruction, they shewed themselves cruel and implacable. In truth, the destruction of Jerusalem exhibited every scene of horror which imagination can conceive. The besieged, divided into three* parties, and butchering one another, first destroying each the provisions of the rest, and then all perishing by the agonies of famine—yet still all ferocious

* Josephus of the Jewish War, book v. chap. 1.

ferocious and unyielding in their opposition to their common enemy. Rejecting every overture for peace, fulfilling the prediction of the prophet, "that they should trust in their strong holds, yet trust in vain," they provoked the fury of the Roman legions to such a degree, that no authority could restrain it*.

In Jerusalem, during the whole siege, according to Josephus, eleven hundred thousand perished; and during the war, ninety-seven thousand were made slaves. And here another remarkable prediction of their Lawgiver was fulfilled: "The Lord (says "he) shall send thee into Egypt again with ships, "by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou "shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be "offered for sale unto your enemies for bondmen "and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you†." This prediction was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, says Josephus ‡: Of the captives above seventeen years of age, he sent many bound to the works in Egypt; those under that age were sold; but so little care was taken of those miserable captives, that eleven thousand of them perished for want. And the historian adds, that "they

* Josephus, book vi. chap. ix. sect. 3 & 4.

† Deut. xxviii. 68.

‡ Josephus, book vi. chap. ix. sect. 2.

" they were sold with their wives and children at " the lowest price, there being many to be sold, " and but few purchasers." And after their last overthrow by Adrian, we have the unquestioned testimony of history, that many thousands were sold; and those who could not be sold were transported into Egypt, and perished by shipwreck or famine, or were massacred by the inhabitants *. Now such an event as this cannot surely be said to come within the common course of human conjecture, and its accomplishment at two remote periods within the regular and natural progress of human events: Surely we may here conclude there exists the prescience of Inspiration, and the distinct agency of Providence.

The *universal dispersion* of this singular people forms a still more extraordinary feature in their fortune: " The Lord shall scatter thee among " all people, from the one end of the earth even " unto the other," says their Legislator †. And how wonderfully is this prediction at this hour verified! From the burning sands of Africa, to the frozen mountains of Poland; from the confines of China, to the British isles; every country has been traversed by the wanderings and has witnessed the sufferings

* Vide Basnage, book vi. chap. ix. sect. 26 & 28.

† Deut. xxviii. 64.—Vide the particulars of this dispersion, Basnage, books vi. & vii.

sufferings of this unhappy race; every where we see the traces of their commercial activity; every where they exhibit proofs of their unshaken adherence to their Law. At one period, before the refinement of modern civilization had opened such general intercourse amongst the nations of the earth, that the established merchant can command universal credit, the Jews monopolized the management of almost all remote pecuniary transactions, because, from their universal dispersion, their common language and national connexion, the orders of the Jewish money-brokers could find in every country, and almost every city within the range of commerce, other Jews by whom they would be received and respected. And still do they continue to exist in almost every nation of the habitable globe. On this point we have recent satisfactory testimonies from the East:

"During my residence in the East," says the very respectable Dr. Buchanan *, "my mind was "much occupied with the present state and cir- "cumstances of the Jews. I visited them in the "different provinces of the British dominions."— "By the events of the late war in India, a "colony

* Vide Dr. Buchanan's Speech as to the State of the Jews in the East, delivered at a public Meeting of the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, in December 1809, published in London in 1810.

"colony of Jews have become subject to
"Great Britain, the colony of the white and
"black Jews of Cochin: I visited this colony;
"its number is calculated to be 16,000. The
"number of the Jews in the United Kingdom
"is not reputed to be greater than 14,000; so
"that our Jewish subjects in the East are yet
"more numerous than in the West. The white
"Jews live on the sea coast, the black Jews
"live chiefly in the interior; they call them-
"selves Beni-Israel, for their ancestors did not
"belong to Judah, but to the kingdom of Israel;
"they consider themselves to be descended from
"those tribes who were carried away at the first
"captivity. In some parts of the East (for they
"are dispersed through it) they never heard of
"the second Temple; they never heard of the
"coming of the Messiah: some of them possess
"only the Pentateuch and Psalms and the Book
"of Job."—"The Jews of Cochin (he adds) may
"be addressed with advantage on the subject of
"the Christian religion, for they have the evidence
"of the Syrian Christians before them; these
"antient Christians live in their vicinity, and are
"our witnesses. At one place in the interior of
"the country, which I visited, there is a Jewish
"synagogue and a Christian church in the same
"Hindoo village; they stand opposite to each
"other, as it were the Law and the Gospel,
"bearing

"bearing testimony to the truth in the presence "of the heathen world."

Surely we cannot but see in this statement a clear and irrefragable proof of the accomplishment of those predictions, which foretel the dispersion of the Jewish race from one end of the earth even to the other; and yet the facility with which Providence may prepare arrangements for again reuniting them, when we see two bodies of Jews so numerous, and from each other so remote, as those of our United Kingdom and those of Cochin in Asia, brought as it were into contact by being placed under the dominion, and capable of being influenced by the measures, of the same Christian power. Can it be conceived that such predictions should have been the mere effusions of random conjecture, and such accomplishment the effect of blind chance?

Next to the universal dispersion of the Jewish race, the prophet foretells the miseries and sufferings which should every where attend them, so emphatically expressed by the declaration, "I will draw out a sword after you;" and in the prophetic Legislator's final address to the people*, "The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, "from the one end of the earth even unto the "other; and among these nations shalt thou find "no

* Deut. xxviii. 64, 65.

"no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have "rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of "mind." On almost the slightest glance into the records of history, we find melancholy proofs of the accuracy with which this prediction has been fulfilled. The learned Historian, who has exhibited so accurate a view of the fortunes of the Jews from the destruction of Jerusalem to the beginning of the 18th century, observes, that in former captivities * "God was careful to preserve the nation in a body, by conveying them "to the same place; it was all united together in "the plains of Goshen, preparatory to its departure from Egypt. In the Babylonish captivity, one part inhabited the same cities, and "another peopled both the banks of the same "river; so that when Cyrus determined to restore "them, he reunited them with ease. But at the "destruction of Jerusalem, and afterwards in the "war of Adrian, the nation, weakened by unheard "of massacres, was dispersed into all the provinces of the empire: this dispersion continues "to this hour, and has even extended to the ten "tribes, of whom it is difficult now to discover "the remains in the East, where they were once "numerous and considerable." In the earlier period of their dispersion, they frequently rebelled, and

* Basnage, book vi. ch. i. sect. 2.

and struggled against the oppressions they sustained, which only terminated in rendering them more severe. Thus they were prohibited, by the most rigorous edicts, from appearing at Jerusalem, to which they always turned with unceasing and unabated desire *. Wherever we find them recovering any degree of populousness, tranquillity, and respect, we see the transitory gleam is soon obscured by the darkest shades of sorrow. If in the tenth century they enjoyed in the East a temporary tranquillity, with an establishment of academies and schools, it was speedily destroyed: "When the house of the Abassides (says their "historian), which always favoured them, sunk "from its authority, the sultan who succeeded to "their power, resolved to exterminate the Jews; "he shut up their academies, which have never "since been opened, banished their profession, "killed the prince of the captivity with his family, "and raised so severe a persecution as to reduce "the Jews to a handful of men, disperse them "into the deserts of Arabia, and drive them into "the western world †. Nor could they in the western world find rest. When a military fanaticism collected the Europeans in thousands to recover the Holy Land, the same spirit led them to

* Basnage, b. vi. ch. ix. sect. 27 & 28.

† Ibid. b. vii. ch. iv. sect. 13.

to persecute with indiscriminate fury the nation which in that land had crucified the Lord of Christians, and still regarded his followers with contempt or aversion. "This persecution (says "their historian) was universal, it was felt alike "in Germany and in England, in France and "Spain and Italy; the public cry was, Come, let us "massacre them in such a manner that the name "of Israel shall be no more remembered. They "put to death great numbers, but still greater "numbers, driven to despair by such violence, "destroyed themselves *." In other instances, avarice and injustice were as destructive to them as in this instance fanaticism. Universally engaged in commerce, they accumulated wealth, and wealth drew down upon them pillage and extortion. Well may we here adopt the language of their elaborate historian: "We here behold the "greatest prodigy, in the preservation of the Jew-"ish nation, in despite of all the calamities it has "sustained for 1700 years; we here see a church, "which has been hated and persecuted for 1700 "years, still subsisting and numerous: kings have "often employed the severity of edicts, and the "hands of the executioner, to destroy it; the se-"ditious multitude has perpetrated massacres and "persecutions infinitely more tragical than the "princes:

* Basnage, b. vii. ch. vi. sect. 32.

"princes; both kings and people, heathens, Chris-
"tians, and Mahometans, however opposite in
"other points, have united in the design of ruin-
"ing this nation, and have not effected it. The
"bush of Moses, surrounded with flames, has
"always burnt without consuming. Dispersed
"through all parts of the civilized world, driven
"from or persecuted wherever they have ap-
"peared, they have from age to age endured
"misery and persecution, and waded through tor-
"rents of their own blood; yet they still exist in
"spite of the disgrace and hatred and suffering
"which attend them; while there remains nothing
"of the greatest monarchies antecedent to the
"era of their destruction, but the name *."

It is peculiarly interesting, and must greatly confirm the conclusions for which we have adduced these facts, to observe the exact conformity of the impressions which these events have made on the minds of the Jews themselves, with these conclusions; a conformity most conspicuously shewn in a tract, cited in the Transactions of the Sanhedrim of Jews assembled at Paris a few years since by order of Buonapârte, and entitled, "An Appeal to the Justice of Kings and Nations," written by a Jew. The author, after describing, in all the pathos of eloquence, the sufferings of his nation, by persecution, extortion, calumny, the pious rage of the crusaders,

* Basnage, b. vi. ch. i. sect. 1.

crusaders, the general fury of prejudice and intolerance; after declaring, that it seems as if they were allowed to survive the destruction of their country, only to see the most odious imputations laid to their charge; to stand as the constant object of the grossest and most shocking injustice, as a mark for the insulting finger of scorn, as a sport to the most inveterate hatred; he asks, "What is our "guilt? is it that generous constancy which we "have manifested in defending the laws of our "fathers? But this constancy ought to have en-"titled us to the admiration of all nations; and it "has only armed against us the daggers of "persecution. Having all kinds of torments, "the pains of death, and the still more terrible "pangs of life, we alone have withstood the im-"petuous torrent of time, sweeping indiscrimi-"nately, in its course, nations, religions, and coun-"tries. What is become of those celebrated empires, "whose very name still excites our admiration by "the ideas of splendid greatness attached to them, "and whose power controlled the whole surface "of the known globe? they are only remembered "as monuments of the vanity of human greatness. "Rome and Greece are no more! their descend-"ants, mixed with other nations, have lost even "the traces of their origin; while a population of "a few millions of men, so often subjugated, stands "the test of 3,000 revolving years, and the fiery

"ordeal

"ordeal of fifteen centuries of persecution! We "still preserve laws, which were given us in the "first days of the world, in the infancy of nature! "The last followers of that heathen religion which "had embraced the universe, have disappeared "these fifteen centuries, and our temples are still "standing! We alone have been spared by the "indiscriminating hand of time, like a column left "standing amidst the wreck of worlds and the "ruins of nature. The history of our nation con- "nects the present times with the first ages of the "world, by the testimony which it gives of the "existence of those early periods: it begins at the "cradle of mankind, and its remnants are likely "to be preserved to the day of universal de- "struction *."

* P. 68. of "Transactions of the Parisian Sanhedrim," translated by F. D. Kirwan, esq. Lond. 1807.

PART III.

CONCLUDING LECTURE.

ON THE FUTURE CONVERSION AND RESTORATION OF THE JEWS.

*Expectations of the Jews on this subject—justified by Prophecy—Prophecy of Moses—of Isaiah—Predicts a second restoration—and different in its circumstances from the Return from Babylon—After a larger period—more permanent—This restoration is to be connected with the extension of the Gospel—Present circumstances of the world consistent with this expectation—As to Palestine—Commercial character of the Jewish Nation—The origin and circumstances of the Parisian Sanhedrim—Its tendency to remove Jewish prejudices—Society in England to promote Christianity among the Jews—Other circumstances in the present state of the world, which seem to prepare the way for the accomplishment of the prophecies as to the final triumph of the Gospel—*CONCLUSION.

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WHEN we contemplate the singular fortunes of the Jewish people, from its first origin to the present hour; when we compare their unparalleled dispersion and sufferings, with their equally unparalleled preservation as a distinct nation; we cannot but feel a strong curiosity to discover what will probably be their future destiny. We find the expectations they themselves entertain, as extraordinary as their present situation. "No where," says a respectable and discerning observer, who had seen them in the most distant regions, "no where do they despair of returning "to their country, and beholding their promised "Messiah." And again: "I have had many in-"teresting conferences with the Jews, on the "subject of their present state; and have been

"much struck with two circumstances, their con-
"stant reference to the desolation of Jerusalem,
"and their confident hope that it will be one day
"rebuilt. The desolation of the Holy City is ever
"present to the minds of the Jews, when the sub-
"ject is concerning themselves as a nation; for,
"though without a king, and without a country,
"they constantly speak of the unity of their
"nation. Distance of time and place seems to
"have no effect in obliterating the remembrance
"of the desolation. I often thought of the verse
"in the Psalms, 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
"let my right hand forget her cunning.' They
"speak of Palestine as being close at hand, and
"easily accessible. It is become an ordinance
"of the Rabbins in some places, that when a
"man builds a new house, he shall leave a small
"part of it unfinished, as an emblem of ruin, and
"write on it these words, *Zecher Lachorchan*,
"i. e. IN MEMORY OF THE DESOLATION*." And undoubtedly the language of prophecy justifies their looking forward to some most signal and favourable change, some illustrious restoration of their nation to divine favour and temporal prosperity. This change, I have no doubt, will consist primarily in the conversion of the great bulk of the entire nation, the descendants of the Ten Tribes,

* Vide Buchanan's Christian Researches, 2d edit. p. 212.

Tribes, as well as of the Two, to Christianity, and their consequent restoration to the privileges and the blessings of the chosen people of God: and I am persuaded that this will also be attended by the return of the great body of the Jews to Palestine, and their settlement there, with the enjoyment of national independence and great temporal prosperity*. But the belief of this last I would not contend for as a fact, or impose it as a tenet of faith; it does not appear so indisputable or so important as the former conclusion. As to the times and circumstances of either event, the Christian will, I conceive, also pronounce his opinion with great caution and reserve. In order to prove the reality of a superintending Providence, it may be sufficient, that prophecy, antecedent to the events, should produce a general conviction and expectation that some grand era in the Divine dispensations is rapidly approaching; and should exhibit such prophetic characters as will clearly prove the Divine foreknowledge and arrangement of all the circumstances attending it, *after the event has taken place*; though not such as to enable any individual to foretel, with precision, the year in which it is to begin, or the exact process by which it is to be introduced. To establish the

* This is the sentiment of the judicious and excellent Dr. Buchanan; vide his Christian Researches concerning the Jews, p. 220, 2d edit.

the truth of the prophecy, rather than to render uninspired individuals, at any particular period, prophets, seems to be the design of the sacred Scriptures *. Directed by these principles, let us proceed to examine the prophetic writings on these interesting topics.

The return of the Jews to Palestine, their consequent re-establishment as a nation, and their restoration from a state of punishment for their national offences, to a state of reconciliation and favour with God, are generally combined in the prophetic writings. The earliest intimation of both is found in the last prophetic address of their inspired Lawgiver: he assures them "whenever thou shalt return unto the Lord thy God, "thou and thy children, and shalt obey his voice "with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; then "the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and "have compassion upon thee, and will return and "gather thee from all the nations whither he hath "scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out "unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence "will the Lord thy God gather thee: And he will "bring thee into the Land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. 'And

* Such was the feeling of Sir Isaac Newton. Vide Newton on the Apocalypse, Part II. chap. i. p. 249. Printed in Dublin 1733.

"And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine "heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the "Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with "all thy soul, that thou mayest live*." In this prediction, we perceive the clearest declaration that the house of Israel is never to be excluded from the peculiar protection of Providence, never irrevocably to forfeit the privileges secured to them in the original covenant with their great ancestor, but is to be for ever preserved a distinct people; and that, however dispersed, whenever they returned to their God, they would certainly be restored to his favour, and as a nation re-established in their country. And it is not obscurely intimated that a period would come, when such a restoration from a wide-spread dispersion would take place, attended with a general conversion to sincere and vital religion, and a consequent enjoyment of national prosperity, far exceeding, both in degree and duration, any they had ever before experienced. This was such a disclosure of the divine purposes as was best adapted to the object which the revelation, at that time communicated to the inspired Lawgiver, was intended to promote. While it enlarged on the immediate rewards and punishments annexed to immediate obedience or transgression, with that fulness and force necessary to make a due impression on the minds of a shortsighted and carnal people, it at the same time opened

* Deut. xxx. 1—6.

opened the more remote dispensations of Providence, sufficiently to prove to the most distant ages the clearness of the divine foreknowledge*, and the harmony of the divine economy.

The subsequent Prophets predict the final and permanent restoration of the Jews, in characters which render it impossible to confound it with that which took place at the close of the captivity in Babylon.—Isaiah, who lived before that captivity, most clearly distinguishes them: "It shall "come to pass (says he) in that day, that the Lord "shall set his hand again a SECOND TIME to re- "cover the remnant of his people †." It was to be a restoration

* Dr. Buchanan remarks, "The prophecy that the Jews "should become an 'astonishment, and a proverb, and a "by-word among all the nations, whither the Lord shall "lead thee,' must afford a contemplation to Infidelity, to "the end of time. This punishment they were to suffer, "because they shed the blood of the Saviour of the world. "Now it is not surprising that Christians should reproach "them for such a crime. But how should we expect that "they would be 'trodden down of the heathen world,' "who never heard of such a Saviour? Behold the "Hindoo, at this day, punishing the Jew, without knowing "the crime of which he has been guilty!" Christian Researches, p. 193, 2d edit.

† Isaiah xi. 10 to 16.—David Levi, in his Dissertation on the Prophecies, sums up the expectations he collects from the prophecies of Isaiah in fourteen particulars, vol. ii. p. 92:—"1st. Vengeance on the enemies of the Jews by God—

restoration from a captivity extending to the remote regions of the globe, where the dominion of Babylon was never felt; even "from the islands of the sea and the four corners of the earth." It was to embrace, not merely the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which were restored after the Seventy years Captivity, but the posterity of the Ten Tribes, which had been carried captive so long before, and

God—2dly. Especially on Edom and Bolsrath, that is Rome—3. A general restoration of Israel—4. Particularly of the Ten Tribes—5. Conformable to that of Egypt—6. The appointed time of redemption will not be prevented even by the great number of sinners amongst the Jews, who will be cut off—7. This Redemption is not to take place until after a great length of time—8. The Shechinah, and the spirit of prophecy, will be restored—9. The apostatized, and those who have quitted the nation, will be restored to it—10. A king of the lineage of David, and called by his name, will reign over the whole nation—11. They will never go into captivity any more—12. The majority of the nations will acknowledge the unity of God, and earnestly desire to be instructed in his Law—13. Peace will then reign in all the earth—14. About the time of the Redemption, the resurrection of the dead will take place; a general one: but only of those who are most distinguished either for piety or wickedness."—Vide vol. i. p. 180 to 200.—Of these expectations, some are evidently extravagant and ill founded. But the very existence of any expectations of such a restoration is a phenomenon unparalleled in the history of any other people; and unaccountable, except by the influence of Revelation. And the extraordinary revival and diffusion of such expectations at this period, even by this very work, is certainly remarkable.

and which have not yet been restored, or the place of their dispersion accurately ascertained. This prophecy declares, that God will "set up an "ensign for the nations, and will assemble the "outcasts of Israel, and gather together the "dispersed of Judah from the four corners of "the earth." This event was to put an end to the disunion of the rival kingdoms of Judah and Israel; "The envy also of Ephraim (says the pro-"phet) shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah "shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, "and Judah shall not vex Ephraim."

In another passage of the same Prophet, a circumstance is predicted to attend the restoration of the people of God, which it is utterly impossible to apply to the return from Babylon: "Who "are these (asks the prophet, concerning the "captives), who are these that fly as a cloud, "and as the doves to their windows? Surely "(he answers) the isles shall wait for me, and "the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons "from far, their silver and their gold with them, "unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the "Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified "thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up "thy walls; and their kings shall minister unto "thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in "my favour have I had mercy on thee*."

Whatever

* Isaiah lx. 8—10.

Whatever may be the accomplishment of these predictions, it is clear it has never yet taken place; the circumstances here described have never yet been realized: they form a clear distinction between the restoration which has already occurred, and that to which we are here taught to look forward.

Another particular also appears to be intimated by the evangelical prophet, perfectly applicable to the present circumstances of the Hebrew nation, but not to those which had existed before the restoration from Babylon. It is intimated, that the divine interposition in their favour, which the prophet here particularizes, would take place after an apparently long cessation from any such interposition, after they had abode "many days "without a king, and without a priest, and without a sacrifice, and without an altar, and "without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and "seek the Lord their God, and David their king; "and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the "latter days*." After "the Lord had taken rest, "and reposed in his dwelling-place, like a cloud "of dew in the heat of harvest†:" after he had waited, "that he might be gracious unto them‡:" after he had "a long time holden his peace, and "been still, and refrained himself;" he is represented

* Hosea iii. 4, 5. and Poli Synopsin in locum.

† Isaiah xviii. 4. ‡ Ib. xxx. 18.

sented as "going forth as a mighty man; and "crying aloud, and prevailing over his enemies: "And I will bring (says he) the blind by a way "that they knew not; and I will lead them in "paths that they have not known; I will make "darkness light before them, and crooked things "straight: These things will I do unto them, and "not forsake them*."

With still greater clearness, Isaiah, in another passage, declares it to be the peculiar office of Christ "to proclaim the acceptable year of the "Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; "and to give those that mourn in Zion beauty "for ashes, the garment of praise for the spirit "of heaviness." It is added, "And they shall build "the old wastes, they shall raise up the former "desolations, they shall repair the waste cities, "the desolations of many generations. And stran- "gers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the "sons of the alien shall be your ploughmen and "your vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the "Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the "Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of "the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast "youselves†." Now the interval of seventy years captivity in Babylon could not be termed a desolation of "*many generations*;" and it was marked by distinguished manifestations of God's wisdom

* Isaiah xlii. 13—16. † Isaiah lxi. 1—8.

wisdom and power in behalf of his chosen people, and his revealed law. The deliverance of the three illustrious martyrs, who, rather than join in the impious idolatry of Nebuchadnezzar, exposed themselves to his utmost rage, and defied his utmost power; the punishment and humiliation of that proud monarch; the signal deliverance of the Jews, by Esther, from the hatred of Haman; and, above all, the prophetic wisdom, miraculous deliverance, and signal exaltation of Daniel—these, and many other facts of the same nature, illumined the gloom of that captivity with an effulgence of divine glory, which manifested the presence of Jehovah as the guardian King of Israel. But now for near eighteen hundred years this chosen people appear as if deserted by their God; no prophet has arisen among them, to instruct, to warn, or to console; no hero has appeared to rescue them. Banished from their Temple and their country, persecution and distress every where have embittered their exile. So often have they been deluded to their destruction by false prophets and false Messiahs, they have sometimes almost despaired of beholding the object of their fondest hope, the long-promised and long-expected Deliverer. True it is, the careful and religious observer, amidst such an apparent abandonment of this unhappy race, can discern the secret, but constant, guardian hand of Providence, which preserves, nay multiplies, this extra-

ordinary

ordinary people, notwithstanding all their sufferings. But yet their situation exactly corresponds to this intimation, that they would seem, for a long period, to be forsaken of their God, and that their final deliverance would thus appear more signal and illustrious.

The future restoration and establishment of the Jewish nation is not to be more distinguished from the past, by the circumstances which it is declared will prepare for and attend it, than by its unprecedented permanence and extent. The language of prophecy labours to express this permanence: "For a small moment (saith God, by "the prophet, to his people) for a small moment "have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies "will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my "face from thee for a moment; but with ever-"lasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, "saith the Lord thy Redeemer*." And again, in language if possible more emphatic and impressive: "The ransomed of the Lord shall return "and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy "upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away†."

But the most important, and to us the most interesting, character of this restoration of the Jewish people, is its inseparable connexion with the extension of the Messiah's Kingdom to the utmost bounds

* Isaiah liv. 7—11. † Ibid. xxxv. 10.

bounds of the earth; the general reception of his religion both by Jews and Gentiles; and the consequent diffusion of virtue and piety, peace and happiness, over all the nations of the world. This is the uniform language, the grand object, the final result of the entire series of prophecy, from the primary promise that "the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent *;" and the covenant with Abraham, "that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed †;" through every prophet, down to the declaration of the great apostle of the Gentiles, that "blindness in part "is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the "Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be "saved: as it is written, There shall come out of "Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away un-"godliness from Jacob‡." In the evangelic prophet Isaiah, the connexion of these two great events is repeatedly declared: it forms the opening and the close, the Alpha and the Omega, of his predictions. With what majesty does he call to Israel to hail the glory of that appearance of Christ; "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and "the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For "behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and "gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall "arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen "upon

* Genesis iii. 15. † Ibid. xxii. 18.

‡ Rom. xi. 25, 26.

"upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy "light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so "that no man went through thee, I will make thee an "eternal excellency, a joy of many generations *." And again, "As the earth bringeth forth her bud, "and as the garden causeth the things that are "sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will "cause righteousness and praise to spring forth "before all the nations." And with equal clearness in the prophet Jeremiah: "Behold, the days "come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David "a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and "prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice "in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, "and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name, "whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR "RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore behold, the days "come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more "say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the "children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, "The Lord liveth, which brought up, and which "led the seed of the house of Israel, out of the "north country, and from all countries whither I "had driven them; and they shall dwell in their "own land †."

Our assurance, that the predicted restoration of this

* Isaiah lx. the entire chapter. † Jerem. xxiii. 5—8.

this chosen people to the divine favour, and their re-establishment in their country, will be ultimately completed, ought not to be shaken, even were we unable to discern any apparent preparation for it in the present circumstances of the world. Yet in times so eventful as those in which we live, when so many awful visitations of Providence prove that the judgments of God are abroad in the earth, and so many unparalleled revolutions appear to prepare for some general and signal change in the aspect of the world, the attention of the religious observer cannot but be excited: he can scarcely avoid examining, with anxious curiosity, whether any circumstances exist, which indicate the approach of this great triumph of Christianity, and this unprecedented improvement in the happiness of man. In this view of the subject, we would naturally turn our attention to that country which had been the appointed residence of the chosen people of God, and which is marked out by prophecy, as the scene where Providence will hereafter display its glory by restoring their power; and we shall observe it, answering indeed the description of prophecy, by its present desolation and sterility, but at the same time open, and as it were unoccupied, and thus prepared more easily to receive whatever new inhabitants it may be destined for. We shall perceive that the Turkish power, which for so many ages has held possession of it with an

iron grasp, is gradually relaxing the firmness of its hold, assailed from without by unceasing hostility, and internally sinking into weakness and decay.

The character and present situation of the Jewish people itself, will, to the Christian observer, exhibit circumstances tending to shew in a still more striking manner, the gradual preparation by which Providence appears to open the way for the accomplishment of those great designs which prophecy announces. Of these, the first, and perhaps the most remarkable, is the universal and decided attachment of the entire nation to commercial pursuits *. In every country where they are dispersed, commerce, in some of its various branches, forms almost the sole occupation of every class. Every description of trader, from the vender of the poorest wares from house to house, to the extended money-dealer, who traffics in millions, fills

* A remarkable testimony to the extent in which the Jews pursue commerce, occurs in a Letter of Lady Wortley Montague, dated Adrianople, May 17, 1717:—"I observed," she says, "most of the rich tradesmen were Jews. They have "drawn the whole trade of the empire into their own hands, "partly by the firm union among themselves, and partly "by the idle temper and want of industry among the "Turks," &c. &c.—Indeed in every part of the world we see their history is connected with their commerce. They were alternately encouraged from their commercial activity, and persecuted in order to plunder them of the wealth their commerce accumulated. Vid. Basnage, book vii. passim, particuarly ch. xxix.

fills its ranks from amongst the Jews; and every object of commercial exertion is pursued with such avidity, that agriculture finds scarcely any followers amongst that people, at least amongst those who are recognised as the descendants of the Two Tribes, which have formed the bulk of the nation since the captivity of the Ten Tribes, and destruction of the kingdom of Israel. This decided predilection for commerce, originally the effect of necessity, has now grown into an unalterable habit; and its tendency to facilitate their return to Palestine, whenever Providence shall in other respects have prepared the way for them, is great and obvious. They have not attached themselves to any other soil, they have not taken root in any other country; their property is of that species which is most easily transferable from one territory to another. Their separation from every nation amongst whom they are dispersed, would, from this circumstance, be attended with the least possible sacrifices; their union with each other would be most prompt and easy. The connexions which this turn of character, and this species of occupation, may form between the chosen people, and such nations as shall be most distinguished for commercial exertion and naval power, may materially facilitate the accomplishment of that remarkable prophecy of Isaiah, before quoted, which declares, when speaking of

of the grand restoration of the people of God, "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships "of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, "their silver and their gold with them, unto the "name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy "One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee."

Another circumstance, not less deserving notice in the present situation of this singular people, is found in the extraordinary attention they have excited, and the unprecedented degree of consideration they have received within these few years, from the two most distinguished nations of the European world. The late Ruler of France, amidst his various extensive plans of strengthening his power and extending his dominion, turned his regard to this Nation, so long despised, forsaken, and oppressed; he called together the most distinguished Jews in France and Italy; and Paris beheld the extraordinary spectacle of a representative assembly of a part of the Hebrew nation, convened by the command of a powerful European state *. It is true that, as might be naturally expected from the character of that despotic government which convened this assembly, it enjoyed little freedom or dignity. Its debates were controlled, and its resolutions dictated by the power

* Vide Transactions of the Parisian Sanhedrim, convoked May 30, 1806: from the original, by M. Diogene Tama, translated by F. D. Kirwan, Esq. Lond. 1807.

power which convoked it *; and the grand object of its formation ultimately appeared to be, to facilitate the levying of conscripts †; to subject their religious establishment to the control of the state; and to place their population and their property more immediately within the cognizance of the government. Perhaps, also, in the questions proposed to them, and in the allurements held out to engage them in agriculture and arms ‡, and lead

* A remarkable instance of this occurs in the proceedings respecting the series of regulations for the organization of the Mosaic worship, which was agreed upon between the committee appointed by the Sanhedrim, and the commissioners of his Imperial Majesty, before it was proposed to the Assembly; and this was done with a preamble, importing its being unanimously adopted, though it was strongly opposed, and caused a protracted debate. Vide the work above referred to, p. 279 to 284.

† Amongst the regulations mentioned in the last note, is one "That the consistory of each district shall give annually "to government the number of the Israelitish conscripts "within the district." Another, "No praying assembly is "to be formed, without being expressly authorized; and the "consistory is to encourage, by all possible means, the "Israelites of each district to follow useful professions, "*i.e.* husbandry and arms, and to return to government the "names of those who cannot render a satisfactory account "of their means of subsistence."—"The duty of the "Israelites to shed their blood in the cause of France, "with the same zeal as in defence of the holy city," is earnestly enforced. Vide pp. 284. 287, 288.

‡ Vide the same Work, pp. 315, & 319. "Among the followers

lead them to adopt France for their country, something of the spirit of opposition to the supposed tenor of the prophetic writings may have lurked; but however that may be, much has appeared in the transactions of that Assembly to excite the hope, that the way is gradually preparing for removing those prejudices which have so long formed an inseparable barrier between Jews and Christians. We find a strong and manly appeal in behalf of that persecuted people on one side, to the justice and toleration of Christians *, and a full avowal on the other, of the truth and force of that appeal. We discern also a constant recurrence to the original and pure principles of the Mosaic code †, in preference to the innovations and corruptions, the follies and the superstitions of the

"followers of our religion (says the president) we have too "many merchants and bankers, and too few land-owners "and artificers; above all, too few husbandmen and soldiers." p. 319.

* Vide the above Work, passim, particularly from p. 327 to 333, and from 63 to 82.

† Vide p. 177; also pp. 202 & 204; where the very passages adduced in the preceding Lectures, to prove the benevolence of the Mosaic Law, even toward strangers, &c. &c. are brought forward; and the precept of "Love thy fellow creature as thyself," insisted upon.—It is stated "that "in 1800, a Society of Dutch Jews had published their "resolution, to acknowledge only the pure and genuine Law "of Moses, and to reject all those institutions which till "then had been called Talmudic laws. This Society had "numerous

the Talmudic laws. We perceive efforts to improve the education of their children, and particularly to diffuse more generally among them a thorough knowledge of the language of their original scriptures, which must be a necessary preparation for their discovering the true sense of prophecy, and the accomplishment of the various predictions pointing out that Messiah, whom they expect, and we adore *.

It is no small additional proof of the controlling power by which Providence directs this chosen people to fulfil its destinies, that, notwithstanding all the apparent advantages which allure them to shake off such restraints of their Law as are inconsistent with their temporal interests; notwithstanding their apparently implicit submission, and their fulsome, and almost impious, flattery of the great Napoleon; still the grand principle which preserves, and must, while adhered to, preserve them a distinct people, that of avoiding all intermarriages with the professors of any other religion,

" numerous followers.—In 1801 a plan was proposed, to " assemble at Luneville a general congress of the represen- " tatives of all the Jews scattered in all the different " countries of Europe, in order that the prejudices and " practices of a baneful fanaticism should be laid aside," &c. &c. Vide p. 62: also p. 246.

* Vide the above Work, pp. 19. 160. 213; and various other passages.

ligion, is maintained*; a restraint which, if wholly neglected, might confound them with the mass of nations, and therefore seems inconsistent with all the declarations of prophecy, and all the plans of Providence; while at the same time the authority of this Assembly has condemned the liberty of polygamy and divorce†, an indulgence which, while permitted, presented so strong an obstacle to the reception of the strict and pure precepts of the Gospel.

Another most cheering circumstance in the transactions of this memorable Assembly, is its evident tendency to remove that bitterness of spirit, and sooth that irritation, which seventeen centuries of sufferings must have excited in the Jewish race. Their attention has on this occasion been

* The third question proposed to the Assembly, was "Can a Jewess marry a Christian, or a Jew a Christian woman?" On which a long debate took place; and an answer was finally given, that "the Law did expressly forbid marriages only with "the seven nations of Canaan, and besides Ammon, Moab, and "the Egyptians, under certain limitations, and, in general, "nations in idolatry: And that, accordingly, there have been "intermarriages between Jews and Christians in France, "Spain and Germany. But (it is added) we cannot dissemble that the opinion of the Rabbies is against these marriages; and persons married without the benediction of the "Rabbies, would be considered as married *civilly*, but *not* "*religiously*." Vide p. 154.

† Vide the answer to the first and second queries proposed to the Assembly, from p. 151 to 154.

been forcibly led to recollect the favours and the kindness of Christians, that they might advance them as a precedent to justify their claim to a continuance of favours and of kindness now; and the last act of their Assembly was an open, and, I doubt not, a sincere, recognition of their gratitude for the manifold favours conferred on the Israelites in former centuries by the Christian clergy in various parts of Europe, even in times when barbarism, ignorance, and prejudice, leagued, as they express it, together, chased the Jews from the bosom of society. And finally, I remark, that this (as they term it) Political Redemption in France has awakened their attention to the scriptural promises of a divine Deliverer, which, however they may for a moment be misapplied by temporary delusion or interested flattery, such error must be transitory as the cause which leads to it; while the spirit of investigation having been once roused, and the blindness of prejudice against the Christian name in some degree removed, we are led to hope that truth will certainly, and perhaps not very remotely, prevail.

If from the metropolis of the French we turn to that of the British Empire, we there behold the attention of the other powerful Nation, which sways the sceptre of Europe, also directed to the situation and the improvement of this so long persecuted people. This attention indeed originates

from far different motives, and appears to be conducted with far different views: here the leading motives are, sincere benevolence, and the zeal of true religion; not the selfishness of ambition, or the subtlety of policy. The object has been, not to connect them with any mere human establishment, not to bind them to any single state, or bend their conscience to the dictates of any human authority; but to enlighten them with the knowledge of the ever glorious Gospel; to unite them under the dominion of their own Messiah, the Son of David the King of Israel, whose word is the word of truth, and his law the dictate of Heaven, and thus restore this once favoured race to the dignity and the freedom of the children of God. The efforts made for these truly great and truly Christian purposes are too recent *, and their operations and effects as yet too limited, to enable us to pronounce on their final effect. But, surely, much is to be hoped from such a spirit; much to be anticipated from exertions for a purpose, which the God of mercy, the common Father of the Jew and the Christian, cannot but approve. The seed of Gospel truth is now sown; and however

* The Author begs leave to refer to a Sermon preached by him in St. Andrew's Church, Dublin, the 21st April 1811, in aid of the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, for a more full exposition of his views on this subject.

ever minute and inconsiderable it may appear to human observance, we are warranted to hope that it will sink its root deep, and rear its branches high, and spread its shade *wide*, and bring forth abundant fruit.

Of a similar tendency, and inspiring similar hopes, is the increasing zeal of all sincere enlightened Christians, for extending missions into the remotest regions of the heathen world; and above all for translating the Bible into the language of every region of the globe, and presenting the holy Scriptures of the New Testament to the Jews in the Hebrew tongue*, in which alone they could attract attention and respect. It is remarkable, that the progress made in such translations, within these last twenty years†, has exceeded

* This translation began to be put to press last year; and Dr. Buchanan remarks, that Mr. Lee, a scholar of enlarged views, who published a tract called "Israel Redux," in the year 1677, has calculated, from the prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse, that in the year 1811 the times of happiness to Israel should begin. Vide Buchanan's Christian Researches, p. 226.

† Mr. Vansittart, in his Letters in defence of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which they effect with (as it seems to me) an irresistible strength of argument, and certainly with the most admirable Christian temper, states, "that this Establishment has done more for the diffusion of "Christianity, than has been effected in the same time in "any age since the Apostles, as it has in seven years been "the means of preaching the Gospel in FIFTY-FOUR "LANGUAGES.

exceeded that of a century before; and that the activity in forming Bible Societies, and extending Missions in the capital and dominions of Great Britain, within that period, has been almost incredible, when we reflect on the present tumultuous and distressed period of the world, which, as a mere political or worldly calculator would judge, tend so powerfully to divert the attention and exertions of mankind, from objects apparently speculative and remote, and confine them to the care of their immediate preservation, and immediate interest; but which, on the contrary, has roused the attention of all, who possessed any serious reflection, to the mutability of all worldly good, the supreme importance of eternal concerns, and the paramount duty of diffusing the glad tidings of the Gospel, and thus extending the dominion of purity, piety, and benevolence.

Our hopes, of the impediments which have hitherto prevented the conversion of the Jews being gradually removed, must be confirmed by the rapid spread of a spirit of toleration amongst Christians, not only towards the Jews, but towards each other. The disputes and animosities, the cruelties

LANGUAGES." He afterwards proves it has extended to fifty-eight, into twenty-three of which the Scriptures are not known to have been before translated. Vide pages 11 & 37.

cruelties and persecutions, which have attended religious differences amongst Christians, have been a great stumbling-block to the Jews *, who could never recognise in a religion, thus savagely perverted, the system of mercy and peace which their promised Messiah was to establish. But as Christians shall approach to an agreement in every thing essential, and shall learn to preserve brotherly love, notwithstanding lesser differences, the genuine beauties of the Gospel of Peace will be distinctly seen, and the characters of its heavenly origin appear conspicuous, both to the Gentile and the Jew.

We may also be encouraged to hope, that the reception of genuine Christianity will be facilitated by the downfall of the Mahomedan superstition, which, as it originated in deception, was spread by violence, and is totally destitute of proof, appears gradually declining as knowledge and inquiry are diffused, and the despotism which upheld it is narrowed in its extent, and weakened in its authority: and it is notorious how long and heavily the Mahomedan yoke has pressed upon the Asiatic Jews, amongst whom are included many descendants of the Two Tribes of Judah, and probably the entire body of the Ten Tribes of Israel. Another great impediment to the conversion

* Vide remarkable instance in David Levi's Dissertations on the Prophecies, vol. i. p. 72; and from 97 to 122.

version of the Jews, appears likely to be removed by the rapid decline of Popery, which, by exhibiting Christianity as an idolatrous adoration of an inferior Being, shocked the reason and wounded the feelings of the Jews, and thus closed their ears against the preachers of the Gospel, by an almost invincible prejudice; while, by the rigours of its persecution, it terrified them from extending their inquiries and discovering the truth.

The spirit of prophecy, both in the Old and New Testament, connects the conversion of the Jews with the most extended and glorious triumph of the Gospel; and the present state of the world exhibits a variety of circumstances which evidently prepare for this consummation. The Jews, dispersed through every region, habituated to every climate, familiar with the language and the manners of every country, holding a constant correspondence with each other, would form a company of preachers, who without a miracle would proclaim to every nation under heaven, in their own tongue, the wonderful works of God*. "Their sound would go out into all lands, their voice to the ends of the world." If converted, like St. Paul, from inveterate enemies to zealous preachers, their testimony would carry conviction to every heart; and while they adored that Jesus whom they had crucified, as the Son of God, and proclaim that Gospel they had for eighteen hundred years rejected, as

* Acts ii. 11.

as the word of life, all mankind would exclaim, "This is the finger of God*." Thus, as during their alienation, they have been unobjectionable, because hostile, witnesses of the divine origin of those prophecies on which Christianity appeals, they would, when converted from hostility, be resistless preachers of those truths which they had rejected; thus verifying the declaration of the Apostle, that "if the casting them away was the "reconciling of the world, the receiving of them "will be life from the dead†."

The time of these events I would not presume precisely to ascertain; it will certainly be coincident with the close of the twelve hundred and sixty years, which are equivalent to the "time, times, and a half," of Daniel, when God shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people‡; the same period during which, according to St. John in the Apocalypse, the church of Christ was to remain desolate in the wilderness‖; the forty-two months during which the court without the Temple is to be given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city they shall tread under foot§. At whatever era this period be considered as commencing¶, it is evidently now drawing to a close.

* Exod. viii. 19. † Rom. xi. 15. ‡ Dan. xii. 7.
‖ Rev. xii. 14. § Rev. xi. 2.
¶ Faber places its commencement at the year of our Lord 606; Dr. Hales, 610; Mr. Bicheno, 529; Fleming, 552; Bishop Newton,

close. The decline of Papacy and of Mahomedanism; the multiplication of missions, and translations of the Scriptures; the communication lately opened between the ancient and apostolic church of the Syrian Christians in Hindoostan* and the Church of England, tending so strongly to protect the former, and prove the purity of the latter; the spread of Christianity in Asia, Africa, America, in the Frozen and the Torrid Zone, under the Northern and the Southern Pole, as well as under the Equator; the changes in the

s cation

Newton, 727. Its close must be equally uncertain. Vide Dr. Hales's Chronology, page 1358, where seven different terminations of this period are recited.

* Vide Buchanan's Christian Researches, article concerning the Syrian Christians.—When the Portuguese compelled 150 of the Syrian clergy on the coast to attend a synod, headed by a Romish archbishop in place of their own, who had been sent prisoner to Lisbon, they were accused, says Dr. Buchanan, of the following practices and opinions: "That they had married wives; that they owned but two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; that they neither invoked saints, nor worshipped images, nor believed in purgatory; and that they had no other orders or names of dignity in the church, than Bishop, Priest, and Deacon." These tenets they were called on to abjure, or to suffer suspension from all church benefices. It was also decreed, that all the Syrian books on ecclesiastical subjects that could be found, should be burned; "in order," said the Inquitors, "that no pretended apostolical monuments should remain." Vide Buchanan's Christian Researches, 2d edit. p. 89.

situation of the Jews, and the new feelings of mankind towards this singular people;—all these circumstances indicate the approach of that distinguished era, when the conversion of the Jews shall prepare for the fulness of the Gentiles, and all shall become one fold under one Shepherd, even Jesus Christ the Lord.

To conclude: When we observe the nature and the unity of the grand design which pervades and connects the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, and the manner in which they describe the progress and conduct of this design, it seems scarcely possible to doubt their divine original: The design is that of bringing all mankind to an exalted, pure, and spiritual happiness, by teaching, enforcing, and exciting in them love and obedience to the one true God. As this grand object is perfectly singular and unparalleled, no other system of religion so much as professing to attempt it (except such as have plainly borrowed it from the Scriptures, and at the same time debased it with the intermixture of human error and depravity) so the manner in which the Scriptures describe this scheme to have been conducted, is also such as no human invention can be supposed to have formed, no human contrivance could have effected. Indeed when we contemplate the Jewish and Christian dispensations united in one system, which

which extended its views backward to the Creation, and forward to the final catastrophe of the human race—When we perceive that it connects these grand events by ascribing both, with all the intermediate gradations which combine them, to the same great Author, even the SON OF GOD *, "by whom all things were made;" who is the "only mediator between God and man;" and who in the "fulness of time, forsaking that glory which "he had with the Father before the world was," took our nature upon him, that he might live to instruct, and die to redeem, mankind, and has ascended into heaven, there to make intercession for us; whence he will return again in power and great glory to judge the world, and to "render to every man according to his deeds: "to them who, by patient continuance in well-"doing, seek for glory and honour, and immor-"tality; eternal life: but unto them that are "contentious, and do not obey the truth, but "obey unrighteousness, indignation, and wrath; "tribulation and anguish upon every soul of "man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also "of the Gentile: but glory, honour, and peace, "to every man who worketh good, to the Jew "first, and also to the Gentile: for there is "no

* Vide John i. ver. 1 to 14: 1 Cor. xv. 16 to 28: Phil. ii. 5 to 11: Col. i. 13 to 23: 1 Tim. ii. 5: Dan. vii. 13 & 14: Rev. i. 5 to 8: xi. 15 to 19: xv. 3 to 5, and xix. & xx. Vide also Butler's Analogy, Part II. ch. iv & v.

"no respect of persons with God *"—When we see that the Scriptures represent this Divine Being as the centre in whom all revelations meet, the great Agent on whom all human expectations depend—When we view the scheme carried on under this Supreme Lord and King, according to the Scriptures, with an uninterrupted progress from the creation to this hour, and still evidently progressive; exhibiting the Church of Christ, and the Jewish Nation which rejects that Christ, as rendered equally subservient to this grand design of Providence; by which "the kingdoms "of this world will finally become the kingdoms "of the Lord and of his Christ †:" and the triumph of grace here will prepare for the kingdom of glory hereafter—When we contemplate all this, can we avoid exclaiming with the Apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom "and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are "his judgments, and his ways past finding out! "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or "who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath "first given to him, and it shall be recompensed "unto him again? For of him, and through him, "and to him, are all things: to whom be glory "for ever. Amen ‡."

* Rom. ii. 6—11. † Rev. xi. 15. ‡ Rom. xi. 33—36.

SINCE

SINCE the time when this last Lect... Providence, by a series of unexpected and i... has overturned that portentous Power wh... h ... versal slavery and ruin, and has restore... freedom and pe... the European world. Surely this l... consummati... must revive the intercourse, and increase the union of the European States; and encourage a spirit of moderation and justice in public measures, by the illustrious example which the allied Powers exhibited in their hour of triumph—so it tends to inspire the religious observer with the cheering hope, that it will accelerate the removal of national and religious prejudices, the free communication of opinion, the diffusion of knowledge, and the final triumph of Truth. At the same time I confess that the restoration of the Inquisition in Spain, and the efforts of the Roman Pontiff to restore the Order of the Jesuits, and give new vigour to the monastic institutions of Popery, and also the difficulties which appear to impede the total abolition of the Slave Trade, throw a cloud over this otherwise bright prospect—they appear to indicate a slower advance in religious and moral improvement, and inspire a fear, that much labour, and perhaps much suffering, may intervene, before genuine Christianity can overcome the impediments which retard its spread and the corruptions which resist its influence. Of this only we may be sure, that the grand scheme for the advancement of human happiness, by the extension of the Gospel, is in progress, and that in the fulness of time "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," and that thus "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ."

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